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First six worms

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By the same Author (Avia)
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER DONE INTO ENGLISII VERSE
Second edition, revised, price 7/6.

SELECTIONS FROM REVIEWS OF AVIA'S ODYSSEY.

SATURDAY REVIEW.

The work of a poet of no mean merit. We had till now thought Mr. Worsley's *Odyssey* in the Spenserian Stanza as satisfactory a version as was possible, but Avia has shown cause why we should re-consider that judgment. Has given us, and we trust it will give many of our readers, real and genuine pleasure. Archaisms of language are like most other features of an author's style; their effect depends on how they are managed. In Mr. Newman's *Iliad* they were ill-managed; in Avia's *Odyssey* we think them in the main happy and striking. A version of the *Odyssey* in English, which, if not perfect, is original and brilliant.

ATHENÆUM.

Avia's *Odyssey* has life and movement, has what we might be allowed to call "go," in speaking of a work of a different character. Avia has secured what is absolutely essential in Homeric translation, something that answers to the "bright speed" of the hexameter. . . . Avia is generally accurate and scholarly in her interpretation even of difficult and disputed passages; her verse is full of life. Her "*Odyssey*" is scarcely a safe book to give to an imaginative boy, for he would shout his favourite passages about the house as loudly as Walter Scott, when a child, shouted "Hardyknute." This version of the "*Odyssey*," more than any other with which we are acquainted, may be read rapidly. . . . Avia's "*Odyssey*" has such natural brightness, earnestness, and vigour,—she is, after all, so truly inspired by the "*Odyssey*"—that the reader will make haste to lay the Greek text by, and to study in her book a new and most attractive poem, the old and perfect romance as it appears after passing through the atmosphere of a modern temperament.

DAILY NEWS.

This translation by "Avia" is an achievement of considerable distinction, and one for which his readers who cannot read the Greek should be grateful, while those who can will be glad to see the Greek and the English idiom so happily reconciled.

JOHN BULL.

To our surprise, we found that the new translator had reached a very different level of excellence from that to which recent painful experience had accustomed us. Passage after passage of true poetic power, and of genuine appreciation of the spirit of the great original was presented to us, and we were led on from passage to passage with a keen sense of enjoyment which is very unusual in the student of such productions. While the sense of the original has been adhered to in a way which adds considerably to the attraction of the version before us, it has at the same time no little metrical charm if regarded as an original work. This is, we feel, high praise, but is confirmed by the more attentive study which Avia's rendering of the *Odyssey* has won from us almost against our will. It is difficult by any extracts to give an adequate idea of the general level of excellence attained, and the great charm of his poem is to be found in the well-sustained power and melody of whole books, not of isolated passages. . . . The most successful attempt made of late years to reproduce the vigorous ring of the original. The task of selection is no easy one, as almost every page contains some happy rendering of the Greek or some passage instinct with the true Homeric spirit. It is difficult to stop when we have once begun quoting, especially as we feel that we must leave out much that is even more characteristic and excellent than the passages which we have selected. . . . The readers who will take the trouble, minutely, to compare any of the passages which we have quoted with the original Greek, will be surprised to find what unusual accuracy of translation is combined with the poetic vigour of Avia's version. Both for accuracy and force, the version of the *Odyssey* here given may favourably compare with any other in the English language.

PUBLIC OPINION.

Sounding Saxon such as no previous translator of Homer into verse has employed. . . . We are unwilling to mention particular parts of the work for fear of intimating that some may be better than others, whereas it seems to us that equal and extraordinary care has been taken throughout, and a success attained by the author. This fine, bold work is a literary achievement. It will awaken the interest of scholars, the gratitude of those to whom Fate has denied the privilege of reading the immortal poem in the Greek, and the approbation of all who recognise in the translator that true spirit of poetry which prompted and justified his venturesome labours.

STANDARD.

The rendering, while very literal, is spirited, and the meaning of the author seems at all times faithfully preserved.

ACADEMY.

Handles a swinging, flexible metre with considerable skill and force. In the mere numerical faithfulness of line-for-line rendering, *si qua est ea gloria*, he is almost as laudable as Voss.

LITERARY WORLD.

The volume is a poem of more than average beauty, when considered apart from any original.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

No one can fail to recognize in many of the passages the grace and feeling of a true poet.

SCOTSMAN.

Its greatest recommendations, to those who are able to read and appreciate Homer in his native language, will be its wonderfully strict closeness, not only to the sense, but even to the very forms of expression made use of by Homer, and the happy art which the translator has of finding exact English equivalents for Homeric words. English readers, again, will be no less charmed with the purely English verbiage into which he has contrived to convert the grand rolling lines of the grand old poet, thus preserving much of the poetical spirit which is so apt to evaporate in the process of translation, and much of which did, in point of fact, evaporate under Pope's more conventional treatment. Where modern words have failed him, the translator has very properly, but sparingly, had recourse to archaic forms, which though now obsolete, must be fairly intelligible to every cultured reader, and which are admirably adapted for the purposes of poetry. . . . This version preserves much of the force and spirit, as well as of the form, of the original.

GUARDIAN.

We did not expect so soon to have to re-consider, and perhaps modify, the conclusion that prose, despite the inevitable sacrifice of rhythmical and metrical effect, is the only satisfactory medium for presenting Homer in an English dress.

. We have been most agreeably surprised and pleased by a somewhat hasty perusal of the version now before us, written in long swinging lines of a ballad type, with a vigorous flow and "lilt" that seems as near an approach as the genius of our language is likely to make to the "grand old rolling verse" of Homer. We do not know any recent translation of Homer, with the exception of Messrs. Butcher and Lang's prose version, which has on a first reading seemed to bear with it so much of the freshness and simplicity, as well as the vigour and flow, of the original, as this anonymous translation.

LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW.

We have said enough to prove that this is no ordinary work. It shows power as well as grace and literalness : and the metre is occasionally wonderfully flexible in the translator's hands. Readers who have perhaps amused themselves by translating an ode of Horace, or a few choice lines of Virgil, or Homer, must remember that to do this well is a very different thing from translating a whole long poem, and keeping throughout up to the level of the original. This Avia has successfully done ; his work is not a paraphrase but a real translation, very literal and yet full of poetic beauty.

THE ILIAD OF HOMER

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GREEK CLASSICS.

THE ILIAD OF HOMER

DONE INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

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AUTHOR OF

THE ODYSSEY, ETC

X

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THE ILIAD OF HOMER.

BOOK I.

*Of the bitter contention between hero and king ; of pestilence on earth and strife
in heaven.*

HE wrath of Achilles the Peleus-begotten, O Song-queen, sing,
Fell wrath, that dealt the Achaians woes past numbering ;
Yea, many a valiant spirit to Hades' halls did it send,
Spirits of heroes, and cast their bodies to dogs to rend,
And to fowls of ravin,—yet aye Zeus' will wrought on to its end 5
Even from the hour when first that feud of the mighty began,
Of Atreides, King of Men, and Achilles the godlike man.

Which of the Gods into hate and contention drove these twain ?
The son of Latona and Zeus, for his wrath was the war-king's bane, [died ; 10
That he sent forth a plague through the host, and the people were smitten and
For Atreides rejected the prayer of his priest when Chryses cried,
When bereft of his daughter the sea-swift ships of Achaia he sought,
To deliver from thraldom his child, and a countless ransom he brought ;
And the wreaths of Far-smiter Apollo in holy hands he bare
On a golden sceptre, and cried unto all the Achaians there, 15

And to Atreus' sons, the arrayers of war-folk, uttered his prayer :

“ Ye sons of Atreus, Achaians battle-harness-dight,
 May the Gods vouchsafe you, which dwell in the halls of Olympus' height,
 To smite Troy-town, and to win safe home from your war-toils done :
 But take ye my ransom, give back my child, my darling one, 20
 For dread of Far-smiter Apollo, Zeus Allfather's son.”

Then shouted the other Achaians thereto in favouring wise
 To have respect to the priest, and to take the ransom-price.
 But it pleased not the spirit of Atreus' son, Agamemnon their lord,
 For he shamefully drove him forth, with a stern and a masterful word : 25

“ Let me not find thee, old man, by the hollow galleys more,
 Neither tarrying now, neither wending again to the ship-fringed shore,
 Lest of the wreath of the God and his sceptre thy help be small !
 I will not give her up :—nay, sooner shall old age find my thrall
 In Argos, afar from her fatherland-home, in our palace hall, 30
 While yet at the loom she doth pace, and arrayeth her lord's bed there.
 Begone, and provoke me not—that thy feet safe homeward may fare !”

X And the old man quailed at his eyes, and shrank from the threat half-
 By the shore of the thunderous-tumbling sea he went heart-broken : [spoken.
 Far thence he went, and alone that old man cried in prayer, 35
 Cried to Apollo the King, whom Lēto the fair-tressed bare :

“ Hear, Silverbow, who art warder of Chrysê and Killa's fane,
 Hear, thou who in might of thy godhead o'er Tenedos' isle dost reign !
 Smintheus ! if ever I wreathed thy temple in lovely wise,
 If ever I burnt unto thee on thiēe alṭar goodly thighs 40

Of bulls and of goats, vouchsafe this boon to the stricken in years—
May thine arrows requite the Danaan men for these my tears!"

So spake he with prayer and strong crying, and Phoebus Apollo heard ;
And adown from the crest of Olympus he swept with soul wrath-stirred.
His bow on his shoulders he bare, and his quiver, the doom-enfolder : 45
Clashed they and clanged they, the shafts on the wrathful Archer's shoulder,
At the swoop of him earthward : his coming was like to the onrush of night.
Down sat he aloof from the galleys ; he sped forth a shaft on its flight :
Terribly rang the twang of the silver lightning-bright.
First on the mules of the host and the fleetfoot hounds it came, 50
Thereafter his bitter-keen dart at the Danaan men did he aim,
Smiting them : flared evermore the close-thronged death-pyres' flame.
Nine days up and down through the host were the God's wrath-arrows sped :
On the tenth by Achilles the people were called to the folkmote-stead ;
For Hérê the white-armed Goddess moved him to do this thing, 55
For her heart yearned over the Danaans, seeing them perishing. X
And so soon as the place was thronged with the host of the gathering folk,
Arose swift-footed Achilles amidst of the people, and spoke :
" Atreides, now must we wander aback overseas, I trow, [60]
And again get us home, if perchance we may scape from the death-stroke so,
If battle and plague together shall lay the Achaians low.
Go to now, let us enquire of a prophet or priest touching this,
Or a dream-arreder,—for dreams be sent of Zeus, I wis,—
Who shall tell us why Phoebus Apollo's anger burneth so hot,
Whether for vow or for hecatomb-gift remembered not ; 65

If so be that his heart may be moved to accept the sacrifice-smoke
Of lambs and of goats, and to turn from the people his pestilence-stroke."

So spake he, and sat him down, and the great bird-seer rose there,
Kalchas, Thestor's son, who had knowledge of things that were,
And of things that were yet for to be, and the things that had been before, 70
And who guided the galleys Achaian safe to the Troyland shore
By the gift of Phoebus Apollo, the matchless augury-skill.

And he lifted his voice, and he uttered his rede of his heart's good will :

" O Achilles the Zeus-beloved, thou biddest me tell the tale
Of the wrath of Far-smiter Apolio, the king of the arrows of bale. 75
Yea, I will speak, but with covenant-plight swear thou to stand
By my side with all thine heart to defend me with speech and with hand ;
For I trow I shall kindle the wrath of a man that with mighty sway
Ruleth the Argive folk, and him the Achaians obey.

For what is a vassal's strength when the wrath of a king is afire ? 80
Though he quell for a season his fury, and bridle his grim desire,
Yet he layeth up malice against him for days to be in his heart, [part ?]
That the flame of his wrath may consume him :—but thou, wilt thou take my

Answered and spake to him fleetfoot Achilles, Peleus' son :
" Fear not, whatsoever thou knowest of prophecy-lore, say on. 85
For I swear by Apollo the Zeus-beloved, O Kalchas, to whom
Thou prayest, and showest the Danaan folk the high Gods' doom,
No man, while I live, while the light of the sun on the earth I see,
By the hollow galleys shall e'er lay violent hands on thee ;
No man of the Danaans all, not though that name should be 90

A gamemnon—mightiest far this day of Achaians is he."

Then of good heart was the seer, and the peerless prophet spake :
 " Not for a vow he condemneth you, not for a hecatomb's sake ;
 But because of his priest, whom king Agamemnon in shameful wise
 Drave hence, and restored not his daughter, nor took the ransom-price : 95
 Wherefore Far-smiter hath given us woes, and yet shall give.
 He shall turn not the pestilence-horror away, that the people may live,
 Or ever we give back the flashing-eyed maid without ransom or price
 To her dear-loved father, and bring a hecatomb-sacrifice
 Unto Chrysê : so shall we bend him, our prayers find grace in his eyes." 100

So spake he, and sat him down in his place, and arose thereupon
 Agamemnon the hero-king, wide-ruling Atreus' son,
 In anguish of wrath, and his passion-beclouded spirit with ire
 Was filled, and the light in his eyes was a blaze as of flaming fire.
 Unto Kalchas first, with an evil glare in his eyes, spake he : 105

" Prophet of ill ! never yet hast thou spoken good unto me !
 Evermore is it dear to thy soul to be boding the evil doom :
 Never yet hast thou spoken a blessing, or caused that a blessing should come.
 And now mid the Danaan folk art thou prating thy prophet's tale,
 How that for this, good sooth, Far-smiter is working their bale, 110
 Because that I would not accept the splendid ransom-store
 For Chrysêis the maiden, seeing my spirit desireth sore
 Within my pavilion to keep her, who dearer is grown unto me
 Than the lady my wife Klytemnestra, for nowise worser is she,
 Not in stature, nor loveliness, nor in wisdom, nor skill of the loom. 115

Yet even so will I yield her, if this be the high Gods' doom :
 Rather I would that the soul of the people should live than die.
 But prepare ye a prize for me straightway, lest I, and only I
 Of the Argives, abide without honour, for this were a shame to be said :
 For to this are ye witnesses all, that my prize from mine hands hath fled." 120
 Out spake swift-footed Achilles the godlike, and answered him then :
 " Atreides renowned above all—gain-grasping above all men !
 How shall the mighty-hearted Achaians give thee a prize ?
 We wot not of any abundant store that treasured lies ; [remain : 125]
 But the spoil that from cities we took hath been parted, and naught doth
 'Twere unmeet that the people should bring it together, to share it again.
 But thou, yield her up to the God, and so shall the host repay
 Threefold and fourfold the loss of the king in the triumphing day,
 When Zeus shall give us the strong-walled city of Troy for a prey."

Then out spake lord Agamemnon, and grimly answered he : 130
 " Not thus, O Achilles the godlike, how valiant soever thou be,
 Essay thou to cozen : thou shalt not persuade me, nor catch me with guile.
 Ha ! wouldest thou that thou shouldest keep thy prize, and that I the while
 Should be sitting with empty hands ?—‘ Restore yon maid,’ saidst thou ?
 Ay, if the mighty-hearted Achaians will find for me now 135
 A guerdon of no less worth, that mine heart may be satisfied so—
 But and if they shall not give, I, even I, will not spare to go
 And choose thy prize, or the meed that Odysseus or Aias hath.
 I will have it : to whomso I come, he shall chafe in his helpless wrath.
 But for this my pleasure another season shall serve full well : 140

But now will we drag us a black ship down to the vast sea-swell ;
 And therein will we gather us oarsmen enow, and therein will we place
 The hecatomb : thither Chryséis, the maid of the lovely face,
 Will we bring, and let one man mighty in counsel be leader of these ;
 Let Idomeneus, Aias, or godlike Odysseus fare overseas, 145
 Or thou, O Peleus' son, terror-clad above all men that live,
 To offer our sacrifice, that the Smiter from far may forgive.”

Darkened the brow of Achilles, loud did the scorn of him ring :
 “ Ah me !—O shamelessness-clad ! O heart of greed in a king !
 How shall Achaian hereafter thine hest glad-hearted obey, 150
 Or to go on a foray, or strive with his might against men in the fray !
 I came not, I, for hate of the spearmen of Troy oversea
 Hither, in battle to smite them, for what have they done unto me ?
 Never they drove my kine or my steeds to their ships for a spoil ;
 Never on hero-fostering Phthia’s deep-loamed soil 155
 Did they harry my harvests, seeing betwixt their land and mine
 Is many a shadow-ribbed mountain, and leagues of loud sea-brine. [joy,
 But we followed thee, king without honour or shame, that thine heart might
 To avenge Menelaus and thee, O frontless hound, upon Troy !
 But thou carest not, thou, for that ; it is naught in thy thankless eyes ! 160
 Yea, thou dost threaten to snatch from me my guerdon-prize,
 For the which I have striven and toiled, fair gift of Achaia’s sons.
 Never my guerdon is like unto thine, when our mighty ones
 Have smitten a fencèd city of Trojans, a fair-built keep :
 Yet ever the brunt of the fight do I bear ; the battle-tide-sweep 165

Is stemmed by mine hands : yet whensoever they share the prey
 Greater by far is thy guerdon, and I to my ships must away
 With a scanty meed, yet dear, when fainteth my strength in the war.

—Now will I hence unto Phthia, for better I count it by far
 Homeward to speed with my galleys : Achilles, I trow, no more
 Here biding dishonoured, for thee shall gather treasure-store.”

Unto him Agamemnon, King of Men, made scoffing reply :
 “ Ay, turn thou and flee, if thy soul so craveth !—it is not I
 Will beseech thee to tarry : there yet shall be found a faithful band
 Who shall honour the king ; yea, Counsellor Zeus on my side shall stand. 175
 But for thee—of kings Zeus-fostered I hate thee most of all,
 For dear evermore to thine heart are battle and war and brawl.

What though thou be never so strong, God-given thy strength is, I trow.
 Go with those galleys of thine and thy vassals homeward,—go !
 Be a tyrant of Myrmidon slaves !—Tush, naught care I for thee,

Neither quail at thy fury !—List to my threat, who threatenest me :—
 Since Chrysēis is reft from me by Phoebus Apollo’s hand,
 Her will I send away with my ship and my comrade-band :
 But I will take Brisēis the lovely-cheeked ; I will go,
 Even I, to thy tent ; I will take thy guerdon, and so shalt thou know 185
 How much above thine is my might, and all other shall dread henceforth
 To exalt himself against me, and to measure with mine his worth.”

Stung was the soul of Peleides : his heart in his lion-breast
 Wavered in madness of anguish, and wist not which were best—
 Or to snatch from beside his thigh his sword whetted keen for the fray, 190

And to dash the others aside, and to leap on Atreides, and slay,
 Or to hush the storm of his wrath, and to bridle his furious mood.
 While tossed to and fro in the thoughts and intents of his spirit he stood,
 And forth of the scabbard was drawing the great sword's battle-flame,
 Sent down by Hérê the white-armed from Heaven Athénê came,— 195
 Seeing Hérê looked upon both alike with loving care :—
 Behind him she stood, and she grasped Peleides' golden hair,
 Seen only by him,—was none of the rest that beheld that sight :—
 Astonied sore was Achilles, and turned him, and knew forthright
 Pallas Athénâ, and flamed her eyes with awful light. 200
 And the hero spake to the Goddess, and sped the winged word-flight :
 “Why art thou come, O child of Zeus the Aegis-lord ?
 To behold Agamemnon Atreides' despiteful deed and word ?
 Nay, but I tell thee,—and this shall, I trow, be the end of our strife,—
 Himself by his tyrannous dealing ere long shall spill his life.” 205
 Then unto him did Athénê the grey-eyed Goddess say :
 “I have come with intent to assuage thy fury, if thou wilt obey,
 From Heaven,—it was Hérê that sent me, the Goddess of arms snow-fair,
 Who looketh on thee and the king alike with loving care. [210
 Go to now, refrain thee from strife, and draw back thine hand from the hilt ;
 But smite him with words, and reproach him for evils to come of his guilt :
 For this will I tell thee, and surely fulfilled shall the promise be :—
 Fair gifts three times so many ere long shall be brought unto thee
 For this tyrannous wrong :—refrain thee, and hearken to her and to me.”
 Answered swift-footed Achilles, and spake to the presence divine 215
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"O Goddess, I cannot choose but regard her hest and thine,
 How angered soever in spirit ; yea, this is the better deed.
 Whoso obeyeth the Gods, him hear they in time of need."

Then on the hilt of silver he stayed his brawny hand ;
 He hath thrust back into the scabbard the mighty battle-brand, 220
 Obeying the hest of Athénê ;—but she to Olympus had fled ;
 To the throng of the Gods in the halls of the Aegis-lord had she sped.
 But Peleides turned yet again upon Atreus' son, and raged
 With words of defiance : not yet would the storm of his wrath be assuaged :

"Wine-overcome, with the eyes of a dog, and the heart of a deer ! 225
 Never for fight hast thou dared to array thee with buckler and spear
 With the warfolk ; with heroes Achaian to go to the ambush by night
 Never hast dared in thy spirit ; not thou !—it were death in thy sight !
 Better it is that thou prowl through Achaia's war-host wide,
 Robbing of gifts whosoever shall speak against thee and thy pride ! 230
 King that devourest the folk !—over niddering rulest thou ;
 Else had thine outrage, Atreides, been wrought for the last time now.
 But I tell thee,—and this great oath shall confirm the words that I say :—
 By this my sceptre, which never shall bourgeon with leaf or spray,
 Now that it once hath left the stock on the hills forlorn, 235
 Never shall break into green, for the knife from around it hath shorn
 Leaflet and bark, and now by Achaia's sons is it borne,
 By the princes that sit in judgment, and aye defend the right
 By appointment of Zeus : and this shalt thou know for an oath of might :—
 Verily soon for Achilles the sons of Achaia shall languish 240

Sore yearning ; and thou shalt be helpless to help them, for all thine anguish,
 What time beneath Hector the manslayer's feet by hosts they shall bow
 Dying ; and thou with the shame of it—tear thine heart shalt thou
 In thy wrath and thy ruth for thy scorn of Achaia's champion now !”

Wrathful he spake in their ears, and he dashed to the ground at his feet 245
 His sceptre bestudded with gold, and he sat him adown in his seat ;
 While Atreides overagainst him raged. Rose Nestor the old
 Of the winsome, the clear-ringing voice, the shepherd of Pylos' fold : [rolled.
 More sweetly the speech from his lips than the rills from the honeycomb
 And two generations by this had he seen that had lived and were dead, 250
 Men that with him in the days overpast had been born and bred
 In Pylos the hallowed, and he of the third generation was king.
 So with kindly intent he spake in the midst of the stormy ring :

“ Alas and alas ! on Achaia-land cometh bitter annoy,
 And Priam and Priam's sons shall rejoice with exceeding joy ; 255
 And for this shall the hearts of the rest of the Trojan folk be fain,
 For the tidings of all this strife that is kindled betwixt you twain,
 You that in counsel be first of the Danaans, foremost in war !
 Nay, hearken the rede of the old man : younger than Nestor ye are.
 For in sooth in the days overpast with mightier men than ye 260
 Have I gone in and out, yet never did these make light of me.
 For never such men to this day have I seen, and I shall not see,
 Even such as Peirithous, Dryas,—a strong folk-shepherd was he,—
 Kaineus, and Exadius, Polyphemus the god-strong one,
 And Theseus glorious to see as the Deathless, Aegeus' son. 265

Mightiest of all menfolk ever fostered on earth were they ;
 Mightiest they were, and they grappled with mightiest foes in the fray,
 With the Centaurs, the mountain-haunters, and terrible slaughter they wrought.
 I went forth out of Pylos, I joined me to these, in their battle I fought ;
 For they called me themselves, and I hied me afar, from a distant land. 270
 So there in the fight did I play my part ;—no man might stand
 Before these in the battle, none that abideth on earth this day.
 Even they gave ear to my counsel, my rede were they wont to obey.
 Hearken ye also to me, for this were the better part :
 Thou, take not away from the hero the maiden, king though thou art, 275
 But leave her even as at first the sons of Achaia gave.
 And thou, O Achilles, consent not in deadly defiance to brave
 The king, for the honour that falleth to him is not as thine.
 For to him that beareth the sceptre hath Zeus given glory divine.
 And if thou be the greater in strength, whom a Goddess-mother bore, 280
 Yet he is the greater in power, who ruleth o'er many more.
 Atreides, O bridle thine anger !—yield to me now when I pray !
 Refrain from Achilles thy wrath, for that he is the one great stay
 Of all the host of Achaians in battle's evil day.”

Answered and spake to the ancient of days Agamemnon the king : 285
 “ Yea, fitly and well, old sire, hast thou spoken everything.
 But this man would fain be exalted above all others beside ;
 Over all would he fain have the mastery, all men as king override,
 And give the word unto all,—there be some will not brook it, I doubt.
 What if the Gods everlasting have made him a spearman stout ? 290

Is it they that exalt him a brawler, a prince of taunt and flout ? ”

Brake forth Achilles the godlike, in mid-speech taking the king :
 “ Good sooth, and a byword were I for a dastard and niddering,
 If in all things to thee I should cringe, whatsoever thy word may be !
 Unto others give suchlike commands, but not—for thou shalt not—to me. 295
 Give the word, an thou wilt : ’tis not I that will longer brook thy behest.
 This will I tell thee moreover ; thou treasure it up in thy breast :
 Not I for the sake of a girl will in battle mine hands uplift,
 Nor with thee nor another : ye gave and repent,—take back your gift !
 But of all things else that be mine by my swift black ship on the strand, 300
 No whit shalt thou take an I will not, nor wrest it out of mine hand.
 Try, if it please thee, try, that these which be here may know :
 In a moment about my spear shall thy very heart’s blood flow ! ”

So strove they twain, and with words of defiance hot on their lips
 Arose, and dispersed the assembly beside the Achaian ships. 305
 And Peleides away to the shapely galleys, and on to his tent
 Along with Menoitius’ son and his battle-fellows went.
 But Atreus’ son ran down a swift ship into the sea,
 And he chose for her oarsmen a score, and the hecatomb there placed he
 For the God, and the fair-cheeked maid Chryséis aboard did he bring, 310
 And he seated her there : and Odysseus was captain, the counsel-king.

So went they aboard, and over the watery ways sailed they.
 But Atreides commanded the people to cleanse their defilement away.
 So they cleansed their pollution, and into the sea the offscourings they threw;
 And unto Apollo a perfect hecatomb they slew 315

Of lambs and of goats, on the shore, where the furrows unharvested are ;
And the savour enwreathed with the smoke streamed up to the heavens afar.

So wrought they throughout the host ; but Atreides forgat not yet
His feud with Achilles, and spared not to do even after his threat.
To Talthybius then and Eurybates straight did he turn him and say— 320
Heralds they were of the king, and his henchmen swift to obey :—

“ Unto the tent of Achilles Peleus’ son go ye :
Brisēis the lovely-cheeked shall ye lead by the hand unto me.
But and if he shall yield her not, myself will come with more,
And take her by force, and so shall his plight be worse than before.” 325

So speaking, he sped them thence, and with stern behest he sent.
By the shore of the harvestless sea exceeding loth they went.
To the Myrmidon tents they came, and on to the galleys they hied ;
And the hero sitting they found by his tent and his black ship’s side.
Little, I ween, did Achilles rejoice when their faces he saw. 330
There stood they twain, in dread of the king, and in shame-stricken awe :
No word did they speak unto him, neither any request made they :
But he knew it within his heart, and thus did the hero say :

“ Hail, messenger-heralds of men and of Zeus the king of the skies !
Draw near ; Agamemnon only is guilty of this in mine eyes, 335
Not ye, whom he for Brisēis the maiden hath hitherward sent.
Come hither, Patroclus the Zeus-born : lead her forth of my tent,
And deliver her into their hands, and they shall be witnesses then
In the sight of the blessed Gods, in the sight of mortal men,
And before yon ruthless king, if ever all else shall fail, 340

And they have sore need of me to defend them from shameful bale.

For verily onward he rusheth with spirit destruction-blind,

And he hath no wit to discern what lieth before and behind,

Lest in fight by the ships his Achaians the gates of death might find."

So spake he, Patroclus thereafter the hest of his dear friend wrought, 345

And from out the pavilion Brisēis the lovely-cheeked he brought,

And gave to their hands, and again to the galleys Achaian they passed :

Sore loth that lady departed with them. And Achilles at last

Brake suddenly forth into weeping, and turned from his comrades aside,

And sat by the cold grey sea, looking forth o'er the harvestless tide : 350

And outstretching his hands to his mother in passionate prayer he cried :

" Mother mine, since thou barest me doomed to a little span of days,

Well might the Olympian King have vouchsafed to me glory and praise,

High-thundering Zeus : but now small honour have I in his sight ;

For Atreus' son wide-ruling hath done me foul despite : 355

Agamemnon himself hath gotten my guerdon, hath taken my right." X

So spake he with tears fast-falling : his mother heard when he cried,

As she sat by the Ancient her sire in the depths of the moaning tide.

Swift from the cold grey sea like a still sea-mist did she rise,

And in front of her son she sat as the tears ran down from his eyes ; 360

With her hand she softly caressed him, and spake, and uttered the word :

" Why weepest thou, son ? with what grief is thy spirit within thee stirred ?

Speak out, hide it not in thine heart, that we both may know thy pain."

Heavily groaning swift-footed Achilles made answer again :

" Thou knowest ; and why should I tell thee, who knowest all full well ? 365

Unto Thêbê we went, on Eetion's hallowed city we fell ;
 And we sacked it, and hitherward brought we all the spoil away ;
 And fairly the sons of Achaia divided amongst them the prey.
 And they chose out Chrysêis the fair for Atreides' prize of war.
 But it was so, that Chryses, the priest of Apollo the Smiter from far, 370
 Came where the brass-clad Achaians' swift ships darken the shore,
 To deliver from thraldom his child, with a countless ransom-store ;
 And the wreaths of Far-smiter Apollo in holy hands he bare
 On a golden sceptre, and cried unto all the Achaians there,
 And to Atreus' sons, the arrayers of war-folk, uttered his prayer. 375
 Then shouted the other Achaians thereto in favouring wise
 To have respect to the priest, and to take the ransom-price.
 But it pleased not the spirit of Atreus' son, Agamemnon their lord,
 For he shamefully drove him forth, with a stern and a masterful word.
 And the old man turned and departed in anger fierce and fell : 380
 And Apollo gave ear to his prayer, for he loved him passing well ;
 And he sent on the Argives the arrow of bale, and the people died
 One after other : the shafts of the God upon every side
 Sped through the wide war-host of Achaians. The seer unto whom
 Dark things were revealed made known unto us Far-smiter's doom. 385
 Straightway I counselled to turn the God from his anger, and yield.
 Then wrath seized Atreus' son, and he rose forthright fierce-willed,
 And he spake and he uttered a threat, which is even now fulfilled.
 For her are the keen-eyed Achaians this day in a ship fleet-faring
 Bringing to Chrysê, and gifts to the Archer-king are they bearing : 390

But that other a little agone from my tent did heralds lead,
 The daughter of Briseus, given by Achaia's sons for my meed.
 But thou, if thou canst, be a champion now of thy hero-son.
 Go to Olympus, and pray unto Zeus, if thou ever hast done
 Any kindness to strengthen the heart of Zeus, when need was most. 395

For many a time in my father's halls have I heard thee boast
 How thou savedst Kronion the cloudrack-shrouded long ago—
 Thou only of all the Immortals—from shameful overthrow,
 When the other Olympians were fain to have put him in chains, when his foes
 Were Hérê, Poseidon, when Pallas Athénê against him rose. 400

But thou camest, O Goddess, and thou didst break in sunder his bands,
 Swift-calling to far Olympus him of the hundred hands,
 Whom the Gods Briareos name, but all men on earth that be
 Aigaion : stronger is he than his father, the Lord of the Sea.
 And he came, and he sat by the side of Kronion in pride of his might. 405

Then nowise the Gods bound Zeus, for they shrank from his face in affright.
 Of these things put him in mind ; sit thou at his feet, and embrace
 His knees, if perchance he will deign to help Troy's war for a space,
 And cause the Achaians 'twixt galleys and sea to be hemmed, and to fall
 Slain, and to know their king for the joy and defence of them all. 410

That Atreides also may know, Agamemnon of far-stretching rule,
 How he scorned Achaia's best with the ruin-spite of the fool."

Then fast fell Thetis' tears, and low to her son moaned she :
 " Ah me, child, why did I nurse thee !—what horrors were born with thee !
 Ah couldst thou have sat by the galleys unvexed by tears or grief, 415

Seeing thy weird is not for long, but all too brief—
 But now art thou swift of doom and wretched of days above all :
 Wherefore in evil hour did I bring thee forth in mine hall.
 I will hie me with this thy tale to Olympus' snow-heaped crest,
 Unto Thunder-lover Zeus, if perchance he will grant my request. 420
 But thou by the ships fleet-faring abide, and nurse alway
 Thine anger against the Achaians, and utterly hold from the fray.
 For Zeus to the Ocean-stream departed yesterday
 To the Aethiops' holy banquet : the Gods all went in his train.
 Not till the twelfth day dawn will he come to Olympus again. 425
 Then to his palace upreared on foundations of brass will I go :
 Then will I kneel at his feet ; he will hearken my prayer, I trow."

So spake she, and hasted away, and she left him there alone
 Raging his heart within for the maid of the lovely zone,
 Whom they took from his hands by force.

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Now Odysseus by this was come
 To the haven of Chrysê, bearing the sacred hecatomb.
 And so soon as the galley had gotten within the deep-channelled bay,
 They furled the sail, and down in the black hull stowed it away ;
 And the mast to the trestle they lowered by loosening either stay
 With haste, and the oars they plied to gain the mooring-ground. 435
 And forth did they cast the sleepers, and fast the hawsers they bound.
 And forth of the galley adown to the sea-beach sprang the men,
 And forth for Far-smiter Apollo the hecatomb brought they then.
 And forth did Chrysêis step from the ship overseas that had sped.

And her many-counselled Odysseus thence to the altar led : 440

To the hands of her father he gave her, and thus to the priest spake he :

“ Chryses, the King of Men Agamemnon hath sent me to thee
 To bring thee thy child, and to offer to Phoebus a sacrifice
 For the Danaans’ sake, to the end we may yet find grace in his eyes
 Who hath sent on the Argives affliction of moan and anguished cries.” 445

Then into the hands of her father he gave her : with joy he embraced
 His darling ; and they for the God full orderly ranged in haste
 The glorious hecatomb, that fair-built altar around ;
 And they washed their hands, and they sprinkled the barley-grains unground ;
 And for them did Chryses earnestly pray, uplifting his hands : 450

“ Give ear to me, Silverbow, in whose strength Chrysê stands,
 And Killa the hallowed, who rulest in might over Tenedos’ isle !
 Hear, of a surety thou heardest my prayer when I cried erewhile,
 And didst honour thy priest, and didst smite Achaia’s folk full sore.
 Now therefore give ear to me now, and vouchsafe me this one boon more: 455
 Turn from the Danaan folk thy ghastly plague this day.”
 So spake he, and Phoebus Apollo heard that suppliant pray.

Then after the prayer they sprinkled the barley-grains unbrayed, [flayed :
 And they drew back the necks of the beasts, and they severed their throats, and
 And the bones of the thighs they cut out, and, doubly folding it over, 460
 With the fat they wrapped them about, and with pieces of flesh did they cover.
 And the sire laid all on the wood, and he poured bright wine on the brands ;
 While beside him the young men stood with the altar-forks in their hands.
 And after the sacrifice, and the tasting of entrails due,

The rest into pieces they sliced, and they ran the long spits through, [drew.
 And they heedfully roasted the same, and the roast from the flames they with-
 So when they had ceased from their toil, and the banquet was all prepared,
 They feasted, and none lacked aught of the banquet equal-shared.
 And when craving for meat and for drink no more in their breasts was found,
 The boys filled up the bowls, and with flame-flushed wine they crowned, 470
 And they bare to the feasters, and spilled the sacrifice-drops all round.
 And all day long they sang the wrath of the God away ;
 Fair sons of Achaia, the Healer in sweet strains chanted they,
 Hymning the Smiter from far ; soul-gladdened he hearkened their lay.
 And the sun went down in the sea, and the darkness covered the land ; 475
 And beside the ship's stern-hawsers they lay, and they slept on the strand.
 And so soon as the Dawn rose-fingered through folds of her mist-veil broke,
 They sailed oversea for the wide war-host of Achaian folk.
 And Apollo sent them a breeze fast-following over the tide, [480
 And they set up the mast in the ship, and they spread the white sail wide.
 And the sail bellied out with the blast, and the cutwater plunged, as she drove
 The foam from her bows with the hiss and the roar of the sundering wave :
 And over the dash of the surges running her race she flew.
 So when they were come to the wide war-host of Achaia, the crew
 High up on the shelving sands the black-hulled galley drew. 485
 Then laid they the long-stretching lane of the underprops below ;
 And this way and that way thereafter by galley and tent did they go.
 And all this while by the galleys sat that mighty one
 In his wrath, Zeus-born fleet-footed Achilles, Peleus' son.

Never he went to the folkmote, the praise of the wise to win, 490
 Never to war ; but he wearied and pined his heart within,
 There biding, and longed for the onset-shout and the battle-din.
 But at last it befell, when the twelfth morn dawned from that ill day,
 That back to Olympus returned the Gods that abide for aye,
 Even all : Zeus led them. And Thetis forgat not now the request 495
 Of her son, but she floated up from the sea's broad-heaving breast,
 And dawn-mist-veiled to the mighty Heaven and Olympus she soared :
 And sitting apart from the rest she found the Thunder-lord,
 On the topmost crest of Olympus' ridges dizzy-hung.
 And before him she sat her down, and around his knees she clung 500
 With her left hand, the while she stretched her right hand forth to his chin ;
 And to Zeus Kronion the King did she her petition begin :
 " O Zeus Allfather, if ever I helped thee by word or deed
 In strife with the Deathless Ones, O grant me this boon in my need :—
 Honour my son ; swift-doomed above all his fellows is he ; 505
 And lo, Agamemnon the king hath entreated him shamefully.
 He hath gotten his guerdon, hath reft it away in his kingly might.
 O Counsellor Zeus, Olympian, do thou maintain his right,
 And grant to the Trojans victory-triumph, till right be done
 By Achaia's host for the wrong, and honour be paid to my son." 510
 So spake she, and Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper answered her naught,
 But long sat silent : and Thetis, even as erst she had caught
 His knees, so clung she and clave she, and prayed yet again to the God :
 " O promise me this, and confirm the same by the seal of thy nod,

Or refuse it, and so shall I know—for thou art not fear-overborne—515
How that I, among all the Gods, am held in deepest scorn."

Sorely disquieted Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper spake :
“ There shall surely come mischief of this, that thou biddest contention awake
‘ Twixt Hérê and me, when her railing words shall provoke me sore.
Even now mid the Deathless she brawleth against me evermore,520
And saith that still in the battle I fight for Troy, her foe.
Now hie thee back again, that nothing Hérê may know.
And for this that thou askest will I take thought, to bring it about.
Behold, I will give thee the seal of my nod, that thou mayest not doubt :
For this is the mightiest pledge that the Deathless win from me ;525
For it goeth not back, nor deceiveth ; fulfilled without fail shall it be,
Whatsoever I seal with the nod of the head of my majesty.”

He spake, and the dark brows bent for the mighty promise sealed.
Waved round the deathless head of his majesty full-revealed
The ambrosial locks, and mighty Olympus rocked and reeled.530

So when they had thus taken counsel, they parted : thereafter she
From the far-flashing height of Olympus plunged to the fathomless sea.
And Zeus passed on to his hall ; and the Gods all rose up there
Out of their thrones in their Father’s presence : was none would dare
To await him as onward he came ; rose all before their king.535
There sat he adown on his throne. Howbeit ware of the thing
Was Hérê, for she had beheld how Thetis the Silver-shod,
The child of the hoar Sea-ancient, in counsel had sat with the God.
And she chode with Kronion Zeus, and she cried right bitterly :

"What God, O guileful-hearted, hath taken counsel with thee? 540
Dear is it ever to thee, in secret from me and apart
To devise and ordain dark-counsels: never with willing heart
Hast thou deigned to declare it to me, whatsoever thy purpose hath been!"

Answered the Father of Gods and men unto Heaven's Queen :
"Look not, O Hêrê, to know each word that proceedeth from me, 545
My wife though thou art ; thou shalt find it all too hard for thee.
But whatso it fits that thou hear, of all the high Gods then
None shall before thee know it, and none of the children of men.
But whatso I will shall be kept from the Gods of mine heart's good pleasure,
Question not thou thereof, neither search for my counsel-treasure." 550

Queen Hêrê the lovely-eyed made answer to him, and she said :
“ What manner of word hast thou spoken, O Kronos’ son most dread ?
Wherein have I searched out thy counsel in days overpast, or enquired ?
Nay, ever at quiet thou framest all things that thy soul hath desired.
But now am I sorely afraid in mine heart lest the Silver-shod 555
Shall overpersuade thee—Thetis, the child of the hoar Sea-god.
For she sat by thy side in the dawn-mist ; thy knees did she there embrace :
Unto her hast thou pledged thee, I think, by thy nod, unto honour to raise
Achilles, and many Achaians in fight by the galleys to slay.”

Answering her did Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper say : 560
“ Ha ! thinkest thou ?—ever thou thinkest !—thou spiest on me evermore !
But for all this naught shalt thou compass, but farther than ever before
Shalt thou be from mine heart : more bitter thy lot shall be in this.
And what if it be as thou think’st ?—be thou sure that my pleasure it is.

Nay, sit thou still, and be silent, and render obedience to me ;
 Lest nothing the Gods avail thee, not all in Olympus that be,
 If in wrath I draw nigh thee, and lay my irresistible hands upon thee."

So spake he, and quailed Queen Hérê, the Goddess lovely-eyed :
 Silent she sat, hard-curbing the heart of tameless pride :
 But wroth were the Heaven-abiders in Zeus's hall as they heard.
 Then Hephaestus the God-smith craft-renowned took up the word,
 To comfort his dear-loved mother, Hérê of arms snow-fair :

" Ah sure 'twere a bitter chance, and a thing no heart could bear,
 If thus for the deathlings' sake ye twain have strife and jar,
 And stir up a brawl 'twixt God and God : it shall surely mar
 All joy of the glorious feast if triumphant the evil shall be.
 Now my mother in love I entreat—yea, her own heart pleadeth with me—
 To speak Allfather fair, lest the wrath and the might of our sire
 Break forth, and the feast be a storm of confusion because of his ire.
 For, were this the Olympian's pleasure, the hurler of the levin
 From our thrones could dash us : stronger is he than the host of heaven.
 But thou with unangry breath draw near, and with winsome word ;
 So shall we soon find grace in the sight of Olympus' Lord "

He spake, and he sprang to his feet, and the double-chalice cup
 Did he place in the hands of his mother, and spake, as he lifted it up :
 " Be strong, mother mine, to endure the grief on thine heart that lies,
 Lest, O my belovèd, I see thee smitten before mine eyes.
 And for all mine anguish then no help couldst thou have of mine hand,
 For a terrible foe is the Lord of Olympus, if one should withstand.

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Yea, I mind me how once on a day, when I rushed to thine help in thy strait,
 By the foot did he grasp me, and hurl from the threshold of Heaven's gate.
 All day long was I falling, and low as the red sun hung,
 Into Lemnos was hurled : scant breath in my fainting breast yet clung :
 But gently the Sintians lifted and tended the whirlwind-flung."

So did he speak, and the Goddess the white-armed Hérê smiled, 595
 And smiling received the chalice out of the hand of her child.

And he set him to pour to the rest of the Gods from the left to the right,
 For all drawing forth of the bowl sweet nectar rosy-bright.

And loud from the Gods ever-blest did the quenchless laughter rise,
 As they saw Hephaestus strain and pant through the halls of the skies. 600
 So through the livelong day, till the sun's down-going, there
 They feasted, and nothing they lacked of the banquet's equal share.

Neither lacked they delight of the lovely lyre, which Apollo bore,
 And the Muses who chanted with sweet voice changing about evermore. [605]
 But at last, when the sun went down, and the light of his splendour was gone,
 Homeward they hied them, and laid them down to rest, each one
 In the place where his palace stood, which Hephaestus the craft-renowned
 The twin-right-armed, had fashioned with cunning marvel-crowned.

And Olympian Zeus the Lightning-hurler couchward hath hied,
 Where erst he had lain, when over him rippled the slumber-tide. 610
 So he went up and slept, and Hérê the gold-throned lay by his side.

BOOK II.

*Of the Dream of Lies, and the King's trial of the hearts of the people.
Of the war-muster of Greeks and Trojans.*

NOW the rest of the Gods and the car-borne heroes lay in sleep
All night ; but not over Zeus stole slumber sweet and deep.
But ever he mused in his soul in what wise honour should crown
Achilles, and many a Greek by the galleys be stricken down.
And thus, in the thoughts of his heart, him seemed it were best to be done. 5
To send a baneful dream to the king, even Atreus' son. [lips :
And he called up the shadowy shape, and the winged words leapt from his
“ Speed thee, O Dream of bane, to Achaia’s sea-swift ships :
Get thee to Atreus’ son Agamemnon’s tent on the strand,
And without fail say to him all, whatsoever I now command.
Thou tell him—let all the host of the long-haired folk be arrayed
By their thousands, for now shall he take the Trojans’ town broad-wayed ;
For that now the Deathless that dwell in Olympus’ palace-hall
No longer at variance are, for that bowed are the hearts of us all
By the prayers of Hérê, and now to the Trojans shall woes befall.” 15

So spake he, and hasted the Dream, so soon as he heard the command ;
 And swiftly he came to Achaia's fleet-winged ships on the strand,
 And to Atreus' son Agamemnon, and found that battle-lord
 Asleep in his tent, and the balmy slumber around him was poured.
 In the shape of Neleus' son did he stand by the king's head then, 20
 Of Nestor, whom most Agamemnon revered of the ancient men.
 In his likeness the heaven-sent vision uttered forth his rede :

“ Thou sleeping, O son of Atreus the war-wise lord of the steed !
 It beseems not a counsel-chief through the livelong night to slumber, [25]
 Unto whom be committed the folk and searchings of heart without number.
 But now give heed to me straightway : from Zeus am I sent unto thee,
 Who careth for thee with exceeding compassion, afar though he be.
 He bids thee that all the host of the long-haired folk be arrayed
 By their thousands ; for now shalt thou take the Trojans' town broad-wayed.
 For now the Deathless that dwell in Olympus' palace-hall 30
 No longer at variance are, for bowed are the hearts of them all
 By the prayers of Hérê, and woes to the Trojans from Zeus shall befall.
 Thou lay up my words in thine heart, and forget not in any wise
 In the hour when the honey-dew of slumber shall melt from thine eyes.”

So spake that phantom, and passed, and the king was left alone ; 34
 And his heart swelled high with the hope of the deeds that should never be
 For he deemed he should win the city of Priam that seifsame day : [done.
 Ah fool !—for he knew not the doom in the heart of Zeus that lay.
 For yet would Allfather mete forth death-groan and agony-pain
 To the Trojan and Danaan folk in the battle's desperate strain. 40

And he started from sleep, and still rang round him the voice divine ;
 And he rose and sat, and he donned his tunic fair and fine,
 New-woven, and then with his cloak's broad folds did he wrap him around,
 And under his glistening feet his beautiful sandals he bound ;
 And about his shoulder he flung his silver-studded brand, 45
 And he grasped his father's sceptre, the incorruptible wand ;
 And he passed to the brazen-harnessed Achaians' ships on the strand.

Now the Goddess, the Dawn, drew nigh unto far Olympus' height,
 Proclaiming to Zeus and the rest of the Deathless her tidings of light.
 Then the king commanded the clear-voiced heralds his hest to bear, 50
 And to cry to the folk-mote-stead the Achaians with long-flowing hair :
 So they made proclamation, and swiftly the people assembled there.

But first hath he gathered a council of chieftains mighty-souled
 By the ship of the Pylos-begotten king, even Nestor the old.
 So when these were set, he unfolded his counsel dark and deep : 55

“ Hear, friends, there hath come unto me a vision from heaven in my sleep,
 In the balmy night, most like unto Nestor the godlike king
 In goodlihead seemed it, and stature, and outward fashioning.
 And he bowed down over mine head, and he uttered forth his rede :

‘ Thou sleeping, O son of Atreus the war-wise lord of the steed ! 60
 It beseems not a counsel-chief through the livelong night to slumber,
 Unto whom be committed the folk, and searchings of heart without number.
 But now give heed to me straightway : from Zeus am I sent unto thee,
 Who careth for thee with exceeding compassion, afar though he be.
 He bids thee that all the host of the long-haired folk be arrayed 65

By their thousands ; for now shalt thou win the Trojans' town broad-wayed.
 For now the Deathless that dwell in Olympus' palace-hall
 No longer at variance are, for bowed are the hearts of them all
 By the prayers of Hérê, and woes to the Trojans from Zeus shall befall.
 Thou lay up my words in thine heart.' So spake he, and vanished was he, 70
 Fleeting away ; and sleep's sweet fetters slid from me.
 Come then, if so be we may harness Achaia's sons for the fight.
 But first with my words will I make assay, as is meet and right.
 I will give them counsel to flee in the many-benched galleys away ;
 But speak ye to this man and that, and by words constrain them to stay." 75

So spake he, and sat him down, and before that hero-band
 Rose Nestor the king of Pylos, the city beside the sand ;
 And amidst of the warrior-ring with kindly words he spoke :
 " Friends, lords of the Argive cities, and chiefs of battle-folk,
 If from any Achaian beside this dream-told rede had come, 80
 We had deemed it a lying vision, and drawn back far therefrom.
 But he that beheld it is greatest of all the Achaian array.
 Come then, if so be we may marshal Achaia's sons for the fray."

So spake he, and back from the council of princes he led the way.
 And the sceptre-swaying kings to the shepherd of folk gave ear : 85
 And they rose and followed, and swiftly the throng of the folk drew near.
 As forth the countless-thronging tribes of the brown bees pour,
 From the cleft of a rock fast streaming and streaming evermore,
 Clustering, rising, and wheeling around the flowers of spring,
 Here are they, there are they, murmuring myriads hovering ; 90

So came they, many a nation, forth from the ships and the camp,
 In front of the sandy beach, with multitudinous tramp,
 To the folkmote-stead ; and speeding them on like a spreading flame
 Went Rumour amongst them, the herald of Zeus, and thronging they came. [95]
 Stirred they and tossed as the waves of the sea, and beneath them the ground
 Rang as they sat them adown : through the whirling storm of sound
 Nine heralds were shouting to hush them, to still their clamourings,
 And to cause them to hearken the voice of the heaven-fostered kings.
 But at last were the war-folk set, and were stayed in their places, and quelled
 Was the storm of their babble, and Lord Agamemnon arose, and he held 100
 The sceptre by toil of Hephaestus fashioned in days long gone.
 The God-smith gave that staff unto King Zeus, Kronos' son ;
 Zeus gave it to Hermes the Guide-god, the Argus-slayer's meed ;
 King Hermes gave it to Pelops, the goader of the steed ;
 And Pelops gave it thereafter to Atreus, shepherd of folk, 105
 Who left it in death to Thyestes, the lord of many a flock :
 And thereafter Thyestes left it to Agamemnon's hand
 To stretch it o'er many an isle, and o'er all the Argive land.
 Leaning thereon, his rede to the Argive array spake he :
 " Friends, Danaan heroes, henchmen of Arêς, give ear unto me. 110
 Zeus hath bound me in fetters of folly heavy and sore,—
 Ah ruthless, who promised, and sealed that promise heretofore, [rest !
 That I yet should smite strong Troy, and should win to my home and my
 Woe's me for the counsel of bane and deceit, for now is his hest
 That to Argos I get me with shame, since for me much people have died. 115

Yet I ween 'tis the pleasure of Zeus the All-mighty that this should betide,
Who hath brought low many a stately city's crown of pride,
And yet shall bring, for his might is greater than all beside.
Oh this were a mock for the yet unborn to hear, I wis,
That Achaia's array should be warring in vain in such fashion as this, 120
So goodly a host and so mighty, and all these years should have fought
With men that be fewer than they, and as yet the end is not !
For if now the Achaians and Trojans would bind them by troth-plight oath
For a space to abide in peace, and we took the tale of both,
And hearthman by hearthman were reckoned all the Trojan men, 125
But we, the Achaians, were told by companies of ten,
And for each band chose one Trojan, our cups at the feast to fill,
Many a banqueting ten should be lacking its cupbearer still :
So many more, I say, be the sons of Achaia than they,
Than the Trojans, the dwellers in Troy ; but a mighty spear-array 130
From many a city is there, for Ilium's battle-stay.
And all these utterly thwart me, and baffle the eager-souled
From smiting the city of Troy, the goodly-builded hold.
For lo, by this nine years of Zeus most high have rolled,
And the planks of the galleys have rotted, unravelled the tacklings are ; 135
And our wives, I ween, and our helpless babes be sitting afar
In our halls, and ever they look for our coming, and still our hand
Hath found not the end of our toil, for the which we sought this land.
Go to now, as I shall give counsel, so let us all obey :
Let us flee with the ships to our dear-loved fatherland far away ; 140

For never, I ween, shall we win broad-wayed Troy-town for a prey."

So spake he, and leapt the hearts in the breasts of them all at the word,
Even all the Achaians of whom his counsel had not been heard.

And stirred was the host like the long sea-rollers forward-sweeping
On the Icarian sea, which the East-wind or South-wind, leaping 145
Forth of Allfather's caverns of cloud, hath uplifted on high.

And as over a cornfield the whirlwind feet of the West-wind fly,
And rank after rank of the ears boweth down as the blast goeth by,
So was the folk-mote stirred ; and the stormy-clamouring crowd
Rushed to the galleys : from under their feet rose the dust in a cloud, 150
And hung overhead in the still air : each unto other they cried
To lay hand to the galleys and drag them adown to the vast sea-tide.

The keel-trenches now are they clearing ; a cry reacheth heaven from the lips
That are thirsting for home, and they pluck the props from beneath the ships.
And the Argives' home-return had been ere the fated day, 155

But that Hérê turned to Athénê, and eagerly thus did she say :

"Out on it, child of the Aegis-lord, O tireless of toil !

Lo how aback to their homes, to their own dear fatherland-soil,
Over the broad sea-ridges shall flee the Argive host ; [160
And for Priam and Troy-town's folk shall they leave behind them a boast,
Even Helen the Argive queen, for whose sake died in the war
Many Achaians by Troy, from their fatherland home afar !

Nay, get thee down to Achaia's brazen-harnessed array,
And with winsome words of thy mouth each man of the folk do thou stay,
And withhold them from running the shapely galleys asea through the spray."

So spake she ; the Goddess Athênê the grey-eyed hearkened her rede.
 From the crests of Olympus she darted, and came with eager speed
 Unto where the Achaian ships fleet-faring lay by the sea.
 And Odysseus, the peer of Zeus in counsel, there found she
 Standing, but never he touched his fair-benched ship's dark side, 170
 For over his heart and his spirit was rolling the anguish-tide.
 And hard by his side stood Athênê the grey-eyed, and uttered her rede :
 "O seed of Zeus and Laertes, Odysseus shiftful at need,
 What, thus will ye fling you aboard of the many-benched galleys to flee
 Hence to your homes and your dear-loved fatherland over the sea ? 175
 And for Priam and Troy-town's folk shall ye leave behind you a boast,
 Even Helen the Argive, for whom there died of Achaia's host
 In Troyland many a man, from their fatherland far away !
 Nay, pass thou now through the folk, thou shalt not stint nor stay,
 But with winsome words restrain each man of Achaia's array, 180
 And withhold them from running the shapely galleys asea through the spray."
 Straightway the hero knew that voice as the Goddess spoke,
 And he hasted and ran : from his shoulders he cast aside his cloak ;
 And his henchman the Ithacan herald Eurybates caught the same.
 But to Atreus' son Agamemnon the hero swiftly came, 185
 And received his father's sceptre, the incorruptible wand ;
 And he hied him therewith to the brass-clad Achaians' ships on the strand.
 Unto whatso king he came, or chieftain of battle-might,
 With winsome words he pleaded, and strove to stay his flight :— [190]
 "Good friend, it beseemeth thee not as a dastard to shrink from the fray !

Nay, but abide thou here, and cause thy folk to stay.
 For the mind of Atreus' son not yet dost thou understand :
 He trieth us now, but soon shall the coward feel his hand.
 Lo, the rede that he spake in the council was nowise heard of us all.
 Have a care lest bane from his wrath on the sons of Achaia fall ! 195
 The heart of a king Zeus-fostered is surely a mighty thing ;
 And of Zeus is his honour, and loveth him Zeus the Counsel-king."

But whomso he found loud-shouting, a wight of the common folk,
 Him with the sceptre he smote, and with sharp stern words he spoke :

“ Good fellow, sit thou still, and give ear unto other men now,
 Who are mightier than thou : a battle-blancher and weakling art thou.
 None taketh account of thee in the war or the council-ring.
 It may nowise be that every Achaian shall here be king.
 Ill is the lordship of many, let one lord still bear sway,
 One king, unto whom dark-counselling Kronos' son for aye 205
 Hath given the sceptre and laws, that the rest of the folk may obey.”

So in masterful wise did he marshal the host, and they sped once more
 To the folkmote-stead from the ships and the tents with loud uproar,
 Even as when the surge of the seething sea falls dashing
 On a league-long strand with the roar of the rollers thunderous-crashing. 210

So the rest of the folk sat down, and each in his place was stayed ;
 But Thersites alone with endless words yet babbled and brayed.
 Never his heart lacked speech for his foul imaginings,
 For vain and unseemly wrangling, and speaking evil of kings,
 Even whatso he deemed should awaken the laugh and the scioner's glee : 215

And of all that to Ilium came the most ill-favoured was he.
 Bowed were his legs, and the one foot lame ; on his shoulders he bare
 A hump; and a narrow chest was the narrow spirit's lair ;
 High-peaked was the crown of his head, overstraggled with starveling hair.
 To Achilles and hero Odysseus most hateful he was above all, 220
 For that ever against them he prated. Now 'gan this knave to brawl,
 Shrill-screaming against Agamemnon the godlike : but they that heard
 Were exceeding wroth with the railer, and indignation-stirred,
 While against Agamemnon he shouted, and cried a shameless word : [225]
 “Atreides, what lackest thou more, and for what wouldest thou still upbraid ?
 Filled be thy tents with brass, and many a chosen maid
 Is therein ; for Achaia's sons give ever the best of the spoil
 First unto thee, when a city is won by our battle-toil.
 Or what, art thou hungry for gold, for the price that some one shall bring,
 Some steed-quelling Trojan from Troy, for a dear son's ransoming, 230
 The battle-thrall of mine or another Achaian's sword,
 Or a woman lovely and young—for the lust of the king our lord !
 Yea, for thee to possess alone !—foul shame it is, I trow,
 That a chieftain should bring the sons of Achaia to naught but woe.
 O weaklings and bywords ! Achaian women !—men no more ! 235
 Home with our ships let us get us, and here on the Trojan shore
 Let us leave him to gloat on his guerdons, until he be certified
 Whether we be his shield and defenders or not in the perilous tide,—
 He who now to Achilles, a hero better than he by far,
 Hath done dishonour, hath torn from his hands his guerdon of war. 240

Ha, fury is not in Achilles, the wrong, he regardeth it not
Else had the last of thine outrages now, O Atreides, been wrought!"

So cried he on Agamemnon the shepherd of folk in his spite :
But strode Odysseus the godlike up unto him forthright, [245]
And grim was his look and stern was his voice as he chode with the wight :
 " Thersites, thou railer, how shrill soever of tongue thou be,
Refrain thee, think not to wrangle with kings is for such as thee ;
For, I tell thee, no viler caitiff than thou shall be found in the host,
Of all that with Atreus' sons have come to Troyland coast.
Then let not thy malapert tongue with the names of princes play, 250
Neither cast thou reproaches, nor watch for the home-returning day.
For how these deeds shall befall not yet do we soothly know,
Whether Achaia's sons shall return in weal or woe.
Yet thou must be sitting reviling the king, even Atreus' son,
Agamemnon the shepherd of folk, for the rich gifts battle-won 255
That the Danaan heroes give, and with gibes thou pratest on.
But I tell thee—and surely fulfilled shall it be, this thing that I say—
If I find thee mouthing thy madness again, as it is this day,
Then may the head of Odysseus no more on his shoulders remain,
Never let me be called among men Telemachus' father again, 260
If I take not thee, and strip each rag of thy raiment away,
Thy mantle, thy tunic that veileth thy shame from the sight of day,
And drive thee howling hence to the sea-swift ships by the wave,
Scourged from the folkmote-stead with the shameful stripes of the slave."

So spake he, and laid on his back and his shoulders blow upon blow 265

With his sceptre : he writhed and he cowered, and fast did the hot tears flow ;
 Upstarting across his back did the blood-weal lividly glow
 At the stroke of the sceptre of gold : there sat he in pain and in fear
 With witless-wilderer look, and he wiped away the tear.
 And the folk, howsoever they chafed, laughed on him in gleesome mood, 270
 And thus cried one, as he looked on his fellow thereby that stood :

“ Lo how Odysseus hath fashioned full many a glorious deed
 In arraying the host for the battle, in uttering war-wise rede !
 But this is the best of all he hath wrought in the Argive host,
 He hath smitten the railer dumb, he hath quelled the braggart’s boast. 275
 Ha ha ! no more shall the knave of his malapert spirit be stirred
 To lift up his voice against kingfolk with babble of mocking word.”

So murmured the folk : but Odysseus hath risen sceptre in hand,
 Strong smiter of towns : by his side did Athénê the grey-eyed stand
 In the shape of a herald, and cried to the people to hush them to hear, 280
 To the end that the sons of Achaia, the thousands far and near,
 Might hearken his word, and ponder his counsel with diligent heed.
 And with kindly intent he uplifted his voice, and he uttered his rede :

“ Atreides, to-day the Achaians be minded to do a thing
 That shall make thee utterly vile in all men’s eyes, O king. 285
 Yea, they be false to the promise they gave unto thee in the day
 When hither from Argos the horse-fed land they were sailing away,
 That they would not return till low fair Ilium’s ramparts lay.
 For even as young babes wail, or as widowed women cry, [290
 Faint-hearted they moan to their fellows, and ‘ Home,’ say they, ‘ let us fly !’

Good sooth, we have hardship enow heart-broken to flee from the war :
 For the shipman that bideth for one month's space from his wife afar
 Doth chafe by the side of his long ship, wearying sore to be free,
 Whose jailers be blasts of the storm and the waves of the tossing sea :
 But for us, as the ninth year rolleth around, by the Troyland coast 295
 Still are we biding. I think not scorn of Achaia's host [shame
 That they chafe by the beak-prowed galleys ;—but what, were it not foul
 To have tarried so long, and to go empty-handed as erst we came ?
 O friends, be strong to endure, and a little while abide
 Till we know whether truly or not seer Kalchas prophesied. 300
 For we know this well in our hearts, ye are witnesses all this day,
 Whomsoever the fates of death not yet have borne away,
 How the ships on a long-ago yesterday gathered by Aulis' strand
 Freighted with vengeance for Priam, and woe for the Trojans' land,
 And around the spring at the altars we gathered for sacrifice, 305
 And up to the Deathless Ones did the smoke of the hecatomb rise
 'Neath a beautiful plane whence the sunlight-flashing water was flowing :
 Then a great sign came, a serpent with fire-litten scales red-glowing,
 A terrible thing, which himself the Olympian sent into light :
 From under the altar he darted, and flashed to the plane forthright. 310
 Now therein was the brood of a sparrow, and helpless fledglings were they,
 Nestling under the leaves at the uttermost end of a spray,
 Eight, and the mother the ninth, those little ones that bore.
 And the serpent in pitiful wise devoured them shrieking sore.
 And wailing around her beloved the mother was fluttering ; 315

But he writhed himself up as she screamed around, and he caught her wing.
 But when he had eaten them, mother and fledglings, before our eyes,
 By the God who had sent him forth was he changed in wondrous wise.
 For the son of Kronos the Hider of Counsel turned him to stone :
 And all we stood and marvelled, beholding the thing that was done, 320
 How the Gods' dread portents came in the midst of the hecatomb.
 Forthright spake Kalchas the seer, and he uttered the word of doom :
 ‘Achaians with long-flowing hair, why stand ye in silence by ?
 ’Tis the Counsel-father hath sent us this mighty sign from on high,
 Late, yea, and of late fulfilment, but never the glory shall die. 325
 As yonder serpent hath torn them, mother and young, from the nest, [breast,
 Even eight, and the mother the ninth, which had warmed them to life with her
 So many years shall we wear overseas in battle-toil ;
 At the last in the tenth shall we win that broad-wayed burg for a spoil.’
 So spake the seer, and behold, the fulfilment is on us this day. 330
 O battle-harnessed Achaians, endure to the end to stay
 Here, till the mighty city of Priam be won for a prey !”

Then a cry brake forth from the Argives ; the galleys rang again
 On the right and the left with the terrible thunder of shouting men,
 Crying yea to the rede of Odysseus the godlike, the island-king. 335
 Then Nestor, Gerenia’s horseman, spake to the warrior-ring :
 “O shame ! how like unto children ye babble with empty words,
 Like prattling babes that have naught to do with the strife of the swords !
 What of our covenant-plight ?—of our oaths ?—ay, let them depart ; [340
 To the fire, to the fire with them all, deep counsels and searchings of heart,

The libations of wine unmixed, the hand-troth trusted of yore !
 For idly we wrangle as boys, and for this may we find no more
 Any healing or help, after all these years on the alien shore.
 Now nay, be thy counsel unshaken as ever, Atreides, to-day ;
 Have lordship over the Argive host in the desperate fray.

345

But for them—let them fret out their hearts, the one or two, whose rede
 Is not as the rede of the Argives ; behold they shall not speed,
 Who bid us fare back unto Argos, or ever the Aegis-lord
 Have shown us the end of his promise, if faithful or false be his word.

For I say that to seal it the brow of Almighty Kronion was bent

350

In the day that the Argives boarded the sea-swift galleys, and went
 Oversea, heavy-freighted with slaughter and doom for the sons of Troy ;
 For his lightning flashed forth on our right for a sign and a token of joy.

Wherefore let none make haste to return back home from the strife

Ere each man have lain by the side of a widowed Trojan wife,

355

And avenged the afflictions of Helen, the sighing captive's pain.

But and if for the home-returning any be furious-fain,

Let him lay but his hand to the black-hulled fair-benched galley, that so
 Before all others to doom and the blackness of death he may go.

But in wisdom advise thee, O king, and give ear to our counsel, I pray : 360

No witless word shall be mine, to be lightly cast away.

By tribes and by clans, Agamemnon, divide thou the folk for the fray,
 That tribe may be helper of tribe, and clan clan's battle-stay.

And if thou shalt do this thing, and the folk shall obey thy behest,
 Thou shalt know what chieftain is dastard, what nation faileth the rest,

365

And who be the valiant ;—for each in his place shall be marshalled aright ;—
And shalt know if by doom of the Gods Troy-town boweth not to thy might,
Or by reason of hearts that be faint, and of hands that be skilless of fight.”

Answered and spake unto him Agamemnon, the war-folk’s king :

“ Sooth, father, the best of Achaians art thou in the council-ring. 370

Ah Zeus Allfather, Athénê, Apollo, fain would I be

Had Achaia but ten such counsel-fellows to stand by me !

The city of Priam the king full soon should stoop her neck

Under our hands, overmastered and wasted in ruin and wreck.

But Kronion the Aegis-tosser with troubles hath darkened my life, 375

Casting me into the midst of profitless wrangle and strife.

For Achilles and I fell out, and we strove for a maiden’s sake

With words of contention : yet I was the first into wrath that brake.

But if ever in counsel and heart we be set at one again,

No respite shall Troy have then, be it never so little, from bane. 380

Now get you hence ; take meat, to the end we may forth to the fight.

Keen-whetted be every spear, and be each shield ready-dight :

Let each man heedfully fodder his fleetfoot chariot-steeds :

Let each look well to the wheels of his car for the battle’s needs,

That in bitter strife he may grapple the livelong day with the foe. 385

No respite, though never so little, the battle-strain shall know

Or ever the fury of men by the coming of night shall be stilled.

On many a breast shall the belt of the warrior-warding shield

Be drenched with sweat, and the hand shall cleave to the weary spear,

And many a horse shall sweat as he strains in the chariot-gear. 390

But and if I shall spy any dastard that fain would be stealing away
 From the battle to bide by the ships—ha, then shall he vainly essay
 To escape from the dogs that shall tear him, the red beaks rending the prey!"

Then shouted the Argives aloud, with a sound as of breakers that roar [395
 When the South-wind hurleth the waves on the cliffs of an ironbound shore,
 When the crags of the headland are lashed evermore by the surge mad-leaping
 'Neath the scourge of the winds as from this side and that side their wings come
 Upstarting they scattered and sped to the galleys with hurrying feet, [sweeping.
 And they lighted them fires mid the tents of their camp, and they took their
 And to this one and that of the Gods everlasting they sacrificed there, [meat.
 Praying to 'scape from the fight, from the War-god's murder-snare.

But the King of Men Agamemnon offered in sacrifice
 A goodly five-year steer unto Zeus high-throned in the skies.

And he summoned the chiefs of the nations Achaian in council to meet,
 Nestor, chieftest of all, and Idomeneus lord of Crete : 405

Therewithal the Aiantes twain and Tydeus' son drew near,
 And the sixth with these was Odysseus, Zeus's counsel-peer.

But unbidden the mighty-voiced Menelaus came with the rest ;
 For the load of his brother's care lay heavy upon his breast. [head ; 410
 And they stood round the beast, and they sprinkled the barley-grains on its
 And Lord Agamemnon prayed in the midst of the kings, and he said :

"Zeus, cloudrack-veiled, sky-throned in thy glory and might above all,
 May the sun not sink in the sea, nor the folds of the darkness fall,
 Till I dash to the ground the palace of Priam in smoke and flame,
 And consume with ravening fire the stately doors of the same, 415

And shiver the breastplate of Hector, and cleave through the heart of my foe
 With the brass, till warriors many, about their chief laid low,
 Rolled in the dust shall have bit the earth in their agony-throe."

So spake he, howbeit Kronion not yet would fulfil his request :
 He accepted the gifts, but he multiplied toil unto him, and unrest. 420
 Then after the prayer they sprinkled the barley-grains unbrayed, [flayed.
 And they drew back the necks of the beasts, and they severed the throats, and
 And the bones of the thighs they cut out, and, doubly folding it over,
 With the fat they wrapped them about, and with pieces of flesh did they cover.
 On the altar they laid them, and blazed the leafless billets beneath ; 425
 And the inwards they spitted, and broiled in the Fire-god's fervent breath.
 And after the sacrifice, and the tasting of entrails due,
 The rest into pieces they sliced, and they ran the long spits through, [drew.
 And they heedfully roasted the same, and the roast from the flames they with-
 So when they had ceased from their toil, and the banquet was all prepared, 430
 They feasted, and none lacked aught of the banquet equal-shared.
 And so soon as the craving for meat and for drink had been done away,
 Gerenia's horseman, Nestor the old, to the rest 'gan say :

" Far-famous Atreus' son Agamemnon the war-folk's king,
 No more let us linger in talk, let us make no tarrying 435
 In the work which the Gods have given to our very hands this day.
 Go to, let the heralds cry to Achaia's mailèd array,
 And let them gather the folk from the camp of the ships on the strand ;
 And we through the host of Achaia will pass, a chieftain-band [440
 That the battle-mood sooner may wake, and the War-god's flame be fanned."

And the saying pleased Agamemnon, the lord of a warrior folk.
 To the heralds with voice clear-pealing his hest forthright he spoke
 To call to the battle-toil the Achaians with long-flowing hair.

And they made proclamation, and swiftly the war-folk gathered there.

And the heaven-fostered kings by the son of Atreus' side

445

Sped swiftly arraying the host, and Athênê the flashing-eyed

Was there with her glorious immortal Aegis that waxeth not old ;

Danced they and streamed on the wind, its hundred tassels of gold,

All lovely-twisted, and each was the worth of a hundred kine :

Flashing it sped she adown the Achaian battle-line,

450

And ever she spurred them on, and she filled each heart with might,

And she made them fain of the onset, afire for the stintless fight.

And suddenly fairer and sweeter the battle-play seemed unto these

Than to flee in the hollow ships to their fatherland far overseas.

As flameth a ravening fire through a forest measureless-wide

455

On a mountain-ridge, and the glare of it lightens on every side,

So the unearthly sheen of the brass as the host swept on

Flashed far through the welkin, and up to the heaven of heavens it shone.

And from them—as the myriad tribes of the flying fowl of the air,

The armies of geese, of the cranes, of the long-necked swans snow-fair,

460

In an Asian mead by Cayster's waters softly-fleeting

Hitherward hover and thither with triumphing wings glad-beating,

As with clangour and clashing they settle ; the whole mead ringeth again ;

So from the tents and the galleys came nation on nation of men

Pouring forth to the plain of Scamander, and ever the deep earth under

465

With the tramp of the ranks and the stamping of steeds rang terrible thunder.
 In the mead of Scamander they halted, the green mead starred with flowers,
 Countless as leaves or as blossoms that wake under springtide showers.

Even as the multitudinous flies in swarms untold,
 That are wheeling and dancing in Spring evermore round byre and fold, 470
 When the milk in the pail foams up, and the bubbles are bright at the brim,
 So swarmed in the plain the Achaian long-haired warriors grim
 Furious-fain to be rending the Trojans limb from limb.

And lightly as herdmen sever their goats by drove and drove, [475]
 When mingle the wide-scattered flocks through the pastures afar as they rove,
 So the war-chiefs marshalled the people, and ranged them to march to the
 And Lord Agamemnon towered in the midst of them all that day, [fray ;
 Like Zeus the thunder-triumphant in eyes and in head was he,
 And as Arê's his loins were, his breast as Poseidon's, the Lord of the Sea.

And even as a bull doth in goodlihead all the herd outshine, 480
 Forasmuch as he standeth fair to be seen mid the gathered kine,
 Even so did Zeus that day make Atreides the hero-king
 Peerless mid thousands, and chief in the chieftains' gathering.

Tell to me, Muses now, in Olympian halls that abide—
 Ye are Goddesses, ye stand by and behold whatsoe'er doth betide, 485
 But we know certainly naught, we have heard but a rumour of words—
 Tell who were the chiefs of the Danaan war, and their battle-lords.
 But the host of them ne'er could I name, nor the tale of their battle-line,
 Nay, not though I had ten tongues, not though ten mouths were mine,
 And an adamant voice, and within me a heart of brazen thews ; 490

Save and except the Olympian Muses, the daughters of Zeus
 The Aegis-wielder, would count up all unto Troy that came.
 Howbeit the chieftains of galleys, and all their ships, will I name.

Lords of Boeotia's host came Lēitus, Peneleôs,
 Prothoênor and Arkesilaus and Klonius for battle uprose, 495
 With the folk that in Hyriê dwelt, and by Aulis's crag-fringed steep,
 And in Schoinus and Skôlus, and midst Eteônus' hill-clefts deep,
 In Thespeia and Graia, and green Mykalessus the land smooth-meadowed,
 And in Harma and Eilesius, and Erythrae the mountain-shadowed,
 And they that in Eleon abode, and in Hylê and Peteon withal, 500
 And in Okaleê and in Medeon, burg of the stately wall,
 In Kopae, Eutresis, mid Thisbê's cushat-haunted trees,
 Koroneia that looks on the mere, Haliartus' deep-grassed leas,
 And they that abode in Plateia, in Glisas under the steep,
 And they of Thebae the Lesser, the goodly-buildest keep, 505
 Of Onchestus the hallowed, the glorious grove of the great Sea-father,
 Of Mideia, and they that in Arnê the wealth of her vintage gather,
 Of Nisa's shrine, and Anthêdon the uttermost burg of the land :
 Of these sailed fifty keels overseas from Boeotia's strand,
 And each good ship with a hundred and fifty warriors manned. 510

Came they of Asplêdon, and Minyan Orchomenus' valiant ones ;
 Askalaphus led them to war, with Ialmenus, Arês' sons,
 Which were born of a maiden tender-sweet, Astyochê, daughter
 Of Aktor, Azeus' son, for the mighty War-god sought her ;
 And she went up into her bower, and in secret he couched by her side. 515

And with these went thirty marshalled galleys over the tide.

And the Phocians with Schedius came, and Epistrophus led them on,
 The children of Iphitus, mighty-hearted Naubolus' son,
 The abiders in Kyparissus and Pytho with crags girt round,
 And they that in Panopeus, Daulis, and Krisa the holy were found, 520
 Hyampolis' folk, and they that in Anemôria abode,
 And they that dwelt where Kephisus the sacred river flowed,
 And the men of Lilaia beside Kephisus' fountain-head :
 So in Phocia's gathering two score black-hulled galleys sped.
 And their captains ordered the battle, and marshalled the mountaineers, 525
 And set their host in array on the left of Boeotia's spears.

And the Locrians' chieftain was Aias, Oïleus' fleetfoot son,
 No giant, as Telamonian Aias the mighty one ;
 But little of stature he was, and in corslet of linen was clad ;
 Yet in all that host no peer in the javelin-cast he had. 530
 And of Kynus, and Opus, and Kalliarus his war-fellows were,
 And of Bêssa and Skarphê, Augeia withal, the passing-fair,
 And of Tarphê, and Thronius that standeth Boagrius' waters beside.
 So forty ships of the Locrians after their hero hied,
 Of the folk that look o'er to Euboea across the strait sea-tide. 535

And the men of Euboea, the fierce Abantes, there were mustered,
 Of Kalchis, Eretria withal, Histiaia with vines heavy-clustered,
 From Kerinthus hard by the sea, and from Dion that crowneth the steep,
 And Karystus' folk, and the warders of Styra's castled keep.
 From Euboea with Arê's scion Chalkôdon's son, they departed, 540

Elephênor, the chief of the host of Abantes, the mighty-hearted,
 Whom the fleetfoot Abantes followed with stormy hair back-streaming,
 Spearmen furious-fain with their lances deadly-gleaming
 To smite and to rend the harness that warded the foeman's breast.
 And after the War-god's child two score black galleys pressed.

545

And there were the warders of Athens the fair-built burg of war,
 The land of Erechtheus the mighty-hearted, the man that of yore
 Zeus' daughter Athênê fostered : of corn-giver Earth was he sprung ;
 And in Athens she set him on high, in her temple treasure-hung.
 And still as the years roll round do the high-born sons of the land 550
 With bulls and with lambs at the Earth-born hero's altar stand.
 And the captain that led them to war was Menestheus, Peteôs' son ;
 Amid all the earth-abiders like unto him was there none
 In setting the steeds and the shielded heroes in battle-array,
 Save Nestor alone, for that older he was, and in wars grown grey. 555
 And with him sped fifty black ships over the printless way.

And from Salamis Aias led twelve longships over the flood,
 And arrayed them for fight in the place where the ranks of Athens stood.

Came the dwellers in Argos and Tiryns, the giant-fencèd keep,
 Of Hermionê and of Asinê built by the sea-gulf deep, 560
 And of Troezen and ^AÉïonê, Epidaurus fair with the vine,
 And the folk of Aegina and Mases, Achaians of high-born line,
 And these Diomedes the mighty-voiced led forth to the war
 With Sthenelus, well-loved son of Kapaneus famous of yore.
 And with these Euryalus fared, that godlike-goodly one,

565

The hero-child of the king Mekistes, Talaon's son.
 Diomedes the mighty-voiced to the war led forth all these,
 And in fourscore black-hulled ships was the host of them borne overseas.

Came they of Mycenae the stately, the city of giant wail,
 Of Corinth the wealthy, and beautiful-buildest Kleônae withal, 570
 And the folk of Orneia, Araithyriae the lovely-fair,
 And of Sikyon, wherein at the first his sceptre Adrastus bare ;
 Hyperêisia's men, Gonoessa's sons came down from her height
 Pellênê's warders, and Aigion's heroes for battle dight,
 And from all the stretch of the Seaboard, from Helikê spreading far : 575
 And theirs were a hundred galleys, and he that led them to war
 Was Atreus' son Agamemnon : the most and the mightiest came
 After him, and himself was arrayed in the splendour of brazen flame.
 Battle-triumphant and peerless mid all the heroes he stood,
 For that noblest he was, and he brought most war-fellows over the flood. 580
 They of mountain-pent Lacedaemon's ravine-land there were arrayed,
 Of Pharis, and Sparta, and Messê's cushion-haunted shade,
 Of Bryseia, and they that tilled Augeia's goodly land,
 And the men of Amyklæ and Helos, the town on the hoarse sea-strand,
 And of Laas, and Oitylus' folk that abide 'twixt mountain and shore, 585
 And the mighty-voiced Menelaus led them in ships threescore,
 Agamemnon's brother, howbeit his people were marshalled apart,
 And amidst them himself went, strong in the fierce desire of his heart,
 Cheering them on to the fight, and his soul was exceeding fain
 To avenge the afflictions of Helen, the sighing captive's pain. 590

Came the dwellers in Pylos, and pleasant Arêne's battle-throng,
 And from Thryon the ford of Alpheius, and Aipy's battlements strong,
 And they that from Kyparissêis and Amphigeneia wended,
 From Pteleon, Helos, and Dorion, where the Muses contended
 With Thamyris, Thracia's bard, and hushed his song for aye, 595
 When he came from Eurytus lord of Oichalia far away.
 In the pride of his heart had he vaunted that his should be victory-fame,
 Though the Muses, the daughters of Zeus, to match them against him came.
 In their anger they took from him sight and the song that theretofore
 Was unearthly-sweet, and they made him forget his harper's lore. 600
 And Nestor, Gerenia's horseman, led that warrior-aid,
 And fourscore galleys and ten with the war-wise king were arrayed.
 Came Arcadia's folk from the shadow of steep Kyllêne's height
 By Aipyts' tomb, the highlanders fain of the grapple of fight,
 They that in Pheneon abode and Orchomenus wealthy with sheep, 605
 From Stratiê, Rhipae, they came, from Enispê's storm-swept steep,
 From Tegea, the tillers of fair Mantinea's pleasant land,
 Stymphêlus' warders stout, and Parrhasia's warrior-band.
 With Lord Agapênor, the son of Ankaios, over the foam
 Went threescore galleys, and each stout keel from their highland home 610
 Bare many Arcadian warriors cunning in battle-lore,
 For that Atreus' son Agamemnon himself had given good store
 Of his fair-benched galleys to speed them over the wine-dark sea,
 For not for the mountain-folk was the sea-waves' mastery.
 Buprasion and Elis the hallowed sent many a battlement-warder 615

From the west, where standeth Hyrminê, and Myrsinus keepeth the border,
Even to the east, where Olenus' rock and Aleision stand.

Four were their princes : with each stout hero from Elis-land
Went ten swift galleys with hosts of Achaians battle-fain.

Sped Thalpius there with Amphimachus, these led squadrons twain ; 620
Of Eurytus sprung and of Kteatus, Aktor's seed were they.
Amarynkeus' scion Diores was chief of the third array.
Polyxeinus the godlike, the son of the king Agasthenes,
Which was son of Augeius, led onward the fourth host overseas.

From Dulichion they came, from the sacred Echinad isles, to the war, 625
The folk that look over the narrow seas unto Elis' shore.
And the chieftain of these was Meges, the War-god's battle-peer,
Whose father was Phyleus the chariot-fighter to Zeus most dear,
Who gat him of old to Dulichion wroth with a sire forsown,
And in fourscore galleys his folk o'er the broad sea-ridges were borne. 630

Odysseus led forth Kephallenia's hero-hearted array ;
In Ithaca's isle, under Nêritus' forest-clad heights, dwelt they,
And on lone Krokykleia, and Aigilips' rugged crags and bare,
And there were the men of Zakynthus, the dwellers in Samos were there,
And the folk that overagainst them abode on the mainland coast. 635
And Odysseus the counsel-peer of Zeus led forth that host :
Twelve crimson prows with the hero the gulf of the waters crossed.

Thoas the son of Andraimon was chief of Aetolia's band,
In Pylêne and Olenus dwelt they, by Pleuron 'twixt mountain and strand,
Mid Kalydon's world of stone, and on Chalkis' wave-lashed shore. 640

For the sons of Oineus the hero were found with the living no more ;
 Gone was the mightiest of all, bright-haired Meleager was dead,
 Over all the Aetolian folk of yore was he captain and head.
 So fourscore galleys with Thoas over the waters sped.

645

Lord of the Cretan folk was Idomeneus spear-renowned,
 Of the men that in Knossus abode, and in Gortys the rampart-crowned,
 Lyktus, Miletus, Lykastus whose white walls glisten afar,
 Phaistus and Rhytion withal, the fair-built burgs of war,
 And other of them that in Crete the hundred-citied were found ;
 And their captain to lead them to war was Idomeneus spear-renowned, 650
 With the battle-peer of the manslaying War-god, Meriones.
 So with them went fourscore black-hulled galleys over the seas.

655

And Tlepolemus, valiant and stalwart scion of Herakles' line,
 Came leading the stately Rhodian men in longships nine,
 War-fellows gathered from Rhodes, from the nation divided in three,
 From Iêlysus, Lindus, Kameirus with white walls fair to see.
 Tlepolemus spear-renowned was captain and chief over these,
 Whom Astyocheia bare to the might of Herakles.
 From the river Sellêis he brought her a captive from Ephyrê-land,
 When many a city of men Zeus-fostered was spoiled by his hand. 660
 But scarce was Tlepolemus grown unto man in the halls fair-built,
 When the blood of his father's uncle unwares by his hand was spilt,
 The blood of the scion of Arês, Likymnus old and grey.
 Then the manslayer builded him ships, and he gathered a great array, [665]
 And he fled overseas from the threats of the kin of the blood that was shed,

The sons and the grandsons of Herakles, hero-sire of the dead.
 So he came unto Rhodes, through homeless affliction and toil as he roved :
 And the folk were divided in three by their tribes, a nation beloved
 Of Zeus who outstretcheth o'er godfolk and men his sceptred hand ;
 And riches unearthly-great did Kronion shower on the land. 670

Three shapely-fashioned galleys from Symê did Nireus bring,
 Nireus, the son of Aglaia and Charopus, bright-faced king,
 Nireus, the comeliest man of all that to Ilium's strand,
 Save only Peleides the peerless, came from the Danaans' land ;
 Howbeit a weakling he was, and but few were his battle-band. 675

From Nisyrus, from Karpathus came they, came Kasus' warriors tall,
 From Eurypylus' city of Kos, from the isles of Kalydnae withal.
 Pheidippus and Antiphus were the battle-captains of these,
 Sons of the isle-king Thessalus, scion of Herakles,
 And with them were thirty galleys arrayed to pass the seas. 680

Now telleth the song of Pelasgian Argos' battle-host
 Who in Alopê dwelt, and in Alus, in Trachis, the rock-rimmed coast,
 And in Phthia and Hellas, the land of lovely bride and dame,—
 Men called them Achaians ; Hellênes and Myrmidons had they to name ;—
 And fifty galleys of these with Achilles their captain came. 685
 But they knew not the shout of the onset now, nor the roar of the fray,
 Because there was no man to lead them, to set their ranks in array,
 For that fleetfoot Achilles the godlike amidst of his galleys lay,
 Wroth for the sake of Brisêis, the beautiful-tressèd maid ;
 Whom he won in the spoils of Lyrnessus by toil of a perilous raid, 690

When he wasted Lyrnessus' burg, and the towers of Thêbê town,
 And Mynes he smote and Epistrophus, mighty in spear-renown,
 The sons of Evênuſ the child of Selêpius king of men.
 For her bitter-hearted he lieth, but soon shall he rise again.

Came they that in Phylakê dwelt, and in Pyrasus flower-bestarred, 695
 The holy place of Demeter and Iton's sheep-fed sward,
 And Antron hoarse with the sea, and Pteleon's deep-grassed mead,
 Spearmen that Protesilaus the hero wont to lead

While yet he was living : but now in the dark earth's lap was he pent,
 And his wife in a desolate home, with cheeks for mourning rent, 700

Was in Phylakê left, for slain was her lord by a Dardan hand
 As first of the host of Achaians he leapt from his ship to the strand.
 Howbeit not lordless his men were, though sorely they longed for the dead,
 But Podarkes, the child of the War-god, their ranks to the battle led,
 Son of the Phylakid Iphiklus, master of many a fold ; 705
 Blood-brother was he of Protesilaus the hero-souled :
 But the younger was this, and mightier far was the elder-born,
 Protesilaus the hero : yet not left chief-forlorn
 Were his people, albeit they longed for their mighty-one passing sore,
 And over the waters with him had there sped black hulls twoscore. 710

Came they that in Pherae abode, Boibêis' mere beside,
 In Glaphyrê, Boibê, and stately Iolcos' towers of pride.
 Eleven were their ships : by the son of Admêtus marshalled they were,
 Eumêlus, the child that a lady divine to Admêtus bare,
 Alcestis, peerless amidst king Pelias' daughters fair. 715

Came they in Methonê that dwelt, and that guarded Thaumakia's keep,
 And that kept Meliboa's walls, and Olizon's craggy steep.
 Philoktêtæ was captain of these, the warrior bow-renowned :
 Seven were their galleys, and oarsmen in each good ship were there found
 Fifty, cunning of hand to deal with the bow in the fray. 720

But their king in a lonely isle in bitter torment lay ;
 For in Lemnos the hallowed they left him, Achaia's war-bound men,
 Anguish-racked by the wound of the deadly snake of the fen.
 There in his pain doth he lie ; but the sea-borne host of war
 Ere long unto Philoktêtæ shall turn in their need once more. 725

Not lordless his men were, albeit they longed for their mighty one,
 But Medon arrayed them for battle, Oïleus' bastard son,
 Whom the grim burg-waster begat, whom Rhénê the fair slave bore.

Came the dwellers in Trikkê, Ithomê the land of crumbling loam,
 And they of Oichalia, Eurytus' warrior-warded home ; 730
 And Asklepîus' children twain led these to the grapple of fight,
 Podaleirius cunning to heal, and Machaon the leech of might,
 And by them were there thirty galleys in ranks of battle dight.

Came Ormenia's folk, and the dwellers by Hypereia's spring,
 From Asterion they came, and from Titanus' white crests mustering ; 735
 Eurypylus led them to battle, Evaïmon's glorious son,
 And fourscore dark-hulled ships to the war-land followed him on.

And there were Argissa's warders, Gyrtonê's fighters withal,
 From Elonê and Orthê they came, and from white Oloösson's wall.
 Polypoites the battle-bider was captain of their array, 740

Son of Peirithous scion of Zeus that abideth for aye ;—
 Of Hippodameia the Queen was he born to the Centaurs' Bane
 In the day when his vengeance was wrought on the monsters shaggy of mane,
 When he drove them from Pelion afar unto where the Aithikans abode :—
 Not alone, for Leonteus was with him, the seed of the Battle-god 745
 Born unto Kaineus' scion Koronus the lordly-hearted ;
 And with these black ships fourscore from the land of their fathers departed.

Came galleys twenty and two with Guneus from Kyphus-land,
 By battle-biding Peraibans and Eniēnians manned,
 The folk in Dodona that dwelt mid the wintry storm and the cloud, 750
 And they that by sweet Titaressus the goodly acres ploughed,
 The flood that giveth his fair-flowing streams to Peneius the riever ;
 Yet not with Peneius the silver-swirling mingle they ever,
 But over the face of his waters they glide as oil outshed,
 For the outflow he is of the Styx, the flood of the Oath most dread. 755

And Prothous son of Tenthredon was lord of Magnesia's array :
 Round Peneius and Pelion's tossing billows of green dwelt they.
 Prothous fleet of foot was the captain that marshalled these,
 And fourscore black-hulled galleys followed him far overseas.

Lo, these were the captains and lords of the Danaan battle-throng. 760
 And who was the mightiest of all, thou tell me, Goddess of Song,
 Of the men and the steeds that followed the sons of Atreus to war ?
 The horses of Pheres' son were the goodliest ones by far,
 The beasts that Eumelus drove, fleet-flying as birds of the air ;
 Matched in the hue of their coats and in age and in height they were. 765

These in Pereia were reared by Apollo the Silver-bowed ;
 Mares were they both, and upon them the terror of battle rode.
 Of the heroes the mightiest man was Aias, Telamon's son—
 While lasted the wrath of Achilles, for like unto him was there none,
 Neither any such steeds as the peerless Peleides' battleward-bearers. 770
 But he the while in the midst of his galleys, the beaked sea-farers,
 Lay nursing his wrath against King Agamemnon, shepherd of folk,
 Atreus' son : and his men on the strand where the white waves broke
 Were hurling the quoits for their sport, and the spears of the woodland war,
 And they shot with the bow : and the steeds, each one by his several car, 775
 Champing the lotus-stalk and the marish-parsley's leaf,
 Stood ; but the cunningly-fashioned chariots of many a chief
 Lay in their tents : for the battle-fain captain of old yearned they, [fray.
 And they roamed up and down through the camp, but not for them was the
 Onward the war-host rolled, and the land seemed all on fire, 780 [ire
 And the earth groaned under their tramp, as it groans 'neath the Thunderer's
 When the ground that encompasseth Typhon is scourged by his levin-flail,
 In the Ariman's land, where lieth the giant, as telleth the tale.
 So under the tread of their feet the earth's heart groaned again
 As onward they came, and swiftly sped they over the plain. 785

To the Troyfolk a messenger, Iris fleet as the storm-wind, sped ;
 From Zeus, from the Lord of the Aegis, she came with tidings of dread.
 To a folkmote the people were come at the gates of Priam the King ;
 All, young men and old, were there at the mighty gathering. 790
 And the fleet-footed Iris drew near, and she stood mid the people and spake,—

And the voice of Polites the son of the ancient king did she take,
 Who was sitting, the watchman of Troy, by his fleetness of foot made bold,
 On the crest of the barrow of Aisuêtes the war-chief old,
 Ever watching to spy the Achaians bursting forth from the ships :—
 So Iris the fleetfoot cried, but it seemed that his were the lips :

795

“ Dear to thee yet, old sire, is the aimless-wavering word,
 Even as in peace-time ; but war, the unswerving and stern, is upstirred.
 Oft have I stood with the host when the heroes for battle were met,
 But such gallant array, but so countless a throng, I beheld never yet.
 For unnumbered as leaves of the forest, untold as the sands of the shore, 800
 Citywards over the plain all afire for the battle they pour.
 Hector !—of all men I charge thee chiefly ; hearken and do :
 For thou hast in the city of Priam war Helpers from far not a few.
 Wide spread over earth be the nations, and diverse speech have they :
 Let them speak each prince to the folk wherever he beareth sway, 805
 And lead them forth of the city, and set them in battle-array.”

So cried she, and Hector was ware that a Goddess spake that rede, [speed.
 And he brake off the folkmote, and they for their battle-gear hied them with
 And wide were the gates all flung, and forth did the war-folk pour,
 Footmen and horsemen, with clashing and tramping and mighty uproar. 810

Now a steep-upspringing hill in front of the city doth stand,
 A lone height looking afar over miles of the low-lying land ;
 And by menfolk 'tis called Batieia, the high knoll thorn-overstrayed,
 By the Deathless the tomb of Myrinê, the fleetfoot Amazon maid :
 There nation by nation they marshalled them, Troy and her warrior-aid. 815

Chief of the Trojans was Flashing-helm Hector, the mighty in war,
 Offspring of Priam ; his men were the most and the bravest by far
 That arrayed them in harness of fight, with the fury of spears aflame.
 Lord of the Dardans Aeneas the son of Anchises came.

At his getting a mortal was bridegroom, divine Aphroditê the bride. 820
 Mid the spurs of Mount Ida in twilight of green had she stoln to his side.
 Not alone went the hero forth, for Antenor's war-wise sons,
 Akamas and Archilochus, went with him, battle-mighty ones.

And there were the wealthy folk in Zeleia-town that abode,
 Where dark in the shadow of Ida the stream of Aisêpus flowed, 825
 Trojans, 'twas Pandarus led them, Lykaon's glorious heir ;
 And the gift of Apollo himself was the bow in his hands that he bare.

From Adresteia they came, from Apaisus' battle-keep,
 Pityeia's warders, and they of Tereia's mountain-steep.
 With Adrestus they went, and Amphius, the corslet of linen who wore, 830
 Children of Merops, the seer of Perkotê : in prophecy-lore
 Was he wisest of men, and he would not his sons should fare to the fray,
 To the battle, destroyer of heroes ; howbeit they would not obey
 Their father's behest, for the fates of black death drew them away.

And there were the ranks of Perkotê, and Praktius' valiant ones, 835
 The men of Abydos and Sestos, and hallowed Arisbê's sons.
 Asius, Hyrtakus' son, was the captain that led them to war ;
 Asius, Hyrtakus' son : from Arisbê swept with his car
 Great horses with coats like flame, from the stream of Sellêis afar.
 And Hippothous led to the war the Pelasgian spearmen stout,

Even they that abode in Larissa with fat lands compassed about.
 With him and Pylaius, the War-god's child, went forth their array,
 The sons of Pelasgian Lethus, Teutamus' son, were they. [brave,

And the Thracians with Akamas came, and with Peirous stalwart and
 The tribes that be sundered from Troyland by Hellespont's rushing wave. 845

The Kikonians' spear-array unto Troy did Euphēmus bring,
 Son of the fostered of Zeus, even Keades, Troezen's king.

And there was Pyraichmes, leading Paeonia's deep-arched bows
 From far-off Amydon town, where Axius' broad stream flows,
 The river whose waters be fairest of all on the earth outspread. 850

Pylaimenes' lion-heart the Paphlagonians led
 From the Henetans' land, where roameth the wild mule fierce and free,
 The warders that kept Kytōrus, the tillers of Sesamus' lea,
 And the folk by the river Parthenius dwelling in goodly halls,
 In Kromnē and Aigialus, and high Erythīnē's walls. 855

Halizonians by Odius led and Epistrophus came to the war,
 From the birth-bed of silver, the land where Alybē standeth afar.

With Chromis came bird-seer Ennomus, captain of Mysia's troop,
 Yet not by the lore of the birds did he save him from black death's swoop,
 But low was he laid by the hands of Aeacus' fleetfoot son 860
 In the river, wherein he slaughtered Trojans many an one.

And the Phrygians by Phorkys were led and Askanius, godlike wight,
 From afar, from Askania's ramparts, afire for the joy of the fight.

The Maeonians with Mesthles and Antiphus stood in their battle-gear ;
 They twain were Talaimenes' sons, and their mother Gygaiē the mere. 865

From the shadow of Tmolus their war-fellows came to the doom of the spear.

Came the Carians with Nastes, the nation that babble an uncouth tongue ;
In Miletus abode they, and Phtheiron's mountain-forests among ;

By the streams of Maeander they dwelt, and by Mykalē's beetling crest, [870
And with Nastes arrayed and Amphimachus on to the battle they pressed,—
Amphimachus, Nastes withal, meet son of Nomion's pride ;

For bedizened with gold, like a girl, to the battle of heroes he hied.

Fool !—little its splendour availed him in bitter destruction's day,

When slain by the hands of Aeacus' fleetfoot son he lay

In the river, and war-wise Achilles bare that gold away.

875

And the Lycians arrayed with Sarpedon and Glaukus the princely stood ;

From Lycia they came, from afar, and from swirling Simoïs' flood.

BOOK III.

Of the duel between Paris and Menelaus.

SO when these with their chieftains had marshalled them, nation by nation,
for fight,

With clamour the Trojans pressed onward, and outcry, as birds in their flight,
When afar through the heaven cometh pealing before them the cry of the cranes,
As they flee from the wintertide storms and the measureless-deluging rains.

Onward with screaming they fly to the streams of the ocean-flood, 5
Bringing down on the folk of the Pigmies battle and murder and blood,[beneath.
And death-challenge they hurl through the mist of the morn on the foemen
But silently marched the Achaians, breathing the battle-mood's breath,
Steadfastly minded to stand by their war-fellows unto the death. [10]

As a mist overstreameth the hill-crests, brought by the south-wind's might,—
To the shepherds an evil thing, for the robber better than night,—
And no farther than flieth a stone from a man's hand pierceth the sight ;
Even such was the dust-cloud that rose from their feet, and it hung overhead
As Troyward they came, and swiftly over the plain they sped.

Now when host drew nigh unto host, as onward the war-waves flowed, 15

Forth as the champion of Troy Alexander the godlike strode,
 With a panther's hide on his shoulders, a bow, and a battle-brand,
 While shivered and shook two brass-headed spears in the grip of his hand ;
 And he cried upon all the mightiest men of the Argive array
 To fight with him man against man in the terrible battle-play. 20

But him Menelaus the hero, the Arê's-beloved, hath espied
 Stepping forward in front of the warrior-throng with long proud stride ;
 And as joyeth a lion to light on the carcass of some huge beast,
 When he findeth an antlered stag or a wild goat slain for his feast,
 For in frenzy of famine he rendeth the quarry, though never so fain 25 [ta'en ;
 Would the swift hounds chase him away, and the hunters whose prey he hath
 So joyed Menelaus to see Alexander the godlike appear,
 And his eyes laughed over the traitor ; he deemed his revenge was near.
 Down from his chariot he leapt to the ground in his battle-gear. [behold 30

Then saw him the man that had wronged him, who nowise had looked to
 That face in the forefront of fight, and his spirit was stricken acold,
 And backward he shrank from the death to the fence of the shields of his men.
 And as when one spieth a serpent in treading a mountain-glen,
 And backward he leapeth, while tremble his limbs with a sickness of dread,
 And he turneth to flee, with the face of his horror as wan as the dead ; 35

So into the throng of the Trojans stately-charioted
 Quailing from Atreus' son Alexander the godlike fled.

Anc' Iector looked down on him there, and he chode with words of scorn :
 " False Paris ! O face without peer, heart woman-mâd, faith-forlorn ! [40
 Would thou hadst never been wedded—ay, would thou hadst never been born !

Yea, even of that were I fain, and more were our gain therein,
 Than that thou shouldst be thus our reproach and the scorn of all thy kin !
 Ha, but the long-haired Achaians will laugh in their triumph-glee,
 Crying, ' This is the chief of the champions of Troy !'—for that goodly to see
 Is thy body, but manhood or might is there none in the heart of thee. 45
 Was he like unto thee, the man in the sea-swift galleys that hied
 Over the broad surf-ridges with comrades true and tried,
 And was guest of the strangers, and stole him a fair wife out of their land,
 From afar, a daughter of spearmen mighty of heart and hand,
 For a bitter grief to thy father, thy city, and all thy race, 50
 And to them that hate us a joy, and to thee confusion of face ?
 And wilt thou not bide Menelaus the Arê's-beloved ?—not thou !
 Thou wouldest know what a warrior is this whose wife thou hast gotten now.
 Small help shouldst thou have of thy lyre and the gifts Aphroditê bestowed,
 Thy curls and thy comeliness, when low in the dust thou wert bowed. 55
 Ha, but the Trojans be downtrodden cravens, or long agone
 A garment of stone hadst thou donned for the evils thy lust hath done."
 Answered and spake unto him Alexander the godlike wight :
 " Hector, true be thy words, and thy chiding is meet and right.
 But thine heart never failed thee: 'tis keen evermore as the hard-edged bill 60
 That cleaveth a beam in the hands of the man that with craftsman-skill
 Shapeth him planks for a galley ; the sharp edge doubleth his might ;
 Even so in thy breast is a dauntless soul ever keen for the fight.
 Yet taunt not me with the bounty of Aphroditê the Golden ;
 We may scorn not the glorious gifts in the hands of the Deathless enfolden 65

For whomso they will, but for none to attain where the Gods have withholden.
 But now if thou wilt that I fight for the meed of war-renown,
 Bid the rest of the sons of Troy and Achaia sit them down ;
 And set in the midst Menelaus the Arê's-beloved and me,
 To do battle for Helen's sake, and the treasure that came oversea. 70

And it shall be, that whoso prevaleth, and proveth him stronger in strife,
 He shall take her, and all that treasure, and homeward shall lead her, his wife.
 And the nations shall plight them with oaths, and shall learn lovingkindness
 And in Troyland in peace shall ye dwell, and they shall return full fain [again,
 To Achaia the land of the lovely, to Argos the horse-fed plain." 75

So spake he, and Hector rejoiced at the word with exceeding joy :
 Forth to the midst hath he strode, and he stayeth the ranks of Troy,
 Outstretching his spear, and they all sat down with one consent.
 But the long-haired men of Achaia their bows against him bent,
 Drawing the shafts to the head, and the stones 'gan whirl in the sling. 80
 Then afar down the lines did the voice of king Agamemnon ring :

"Argives, refrain you !—Achaians, cast nor stone nor spear !
 For that Hector Lightning-helm hath a word for the kings to hear." 

So spake he, and they from the battle refrained them, the war-shout died
 Suddenly down, and Hector stood in the midst and cried : 85

"Hear me, ye Trojans and goodly-harnessed Achaian foes :
 Thus saith Alexander, for whose sake first this feud arose :—
 He biddeth the rest of the Trojans and all the Achaian array
 On the bosom of All-mother earth their weapons of war to lay ;
 And here in the midst Menelaus the Arê's-beloved and he 90

Shall battle for Helen's sake and the treasure that came oversea.
 And it shall be, that whoso prevaleth and getteth the mastery,
 He shall take her, and all that treasure, and homeward shall lead her, his wife;
 And with oath-plight and glad lovingkindness will all we rest from strife."

Then stayed was the rush of the onset, and hushed was the many-voiced
 And thus did the battle-helper, the lord Menelaus, begin : [din ; 95]

" Hearken ye also to me, for that mine is the heart whereon
 Hath fallen the bitterest anguish :—I trow ye shall soon be at one,
 Argives and Trojans, ye that have suffered woes on woes
 In my quarrel, the feud that first from the prince Alexander arose. 100
 And for whichsoever the doom of death by the Fates is dight,
 Let him die ; but ye which remain shall be set at one forthright.
 Now bring for us lambs ; one white, of the males, one black, of the ewes,
 For the Earth and the Sun, and a third will we bring for Father Zeus.
 And bring for us Priam your king, that himself may plight the oath, 105
 Even he and none other ; o'erweening his sons be, and faithless of troth ;
 That none by high-handed transgression the oath of Allfather may mar ;
 For vain and unstable of purpose the hearts of the young men are.
 But the old man cometh between, and forward and backward are cast
 His eyes, that with these and with those it may all go well at the last." 110

Then glad were Achaian and Trojan to hear that challenge cried,
 For they trusted that now should they rest from the woeful warfare-tide.
 So they halted the steeds in the ranks, and down from the cars stepped they,
 And they doffed their armour, and cast on the ground their war-array,
 Full nigh, that scant was the space 'twixt host and host that lay. 115

And Hector sent unto Troytown heralds twain, to bring
 The lambs with speed, and to call to the sacrifice Priam the king.
 And the lord Agamemnon hastened the herald Talthybius' feet,
 Bidding him bring the lambs from the hollow ships of the fleet ;
 So to lord Agamemnon the godlike he rendered obedience meet.

120

And to Helen the ivory-wristed is Iris the messenger gone
 In the shape of her husband's sister, the wife of Antenor's son ;
 The wife of the lord Helikaon, Antenor's son, was she,
 The fairest of Priam's daughters, the lady Laodikê.
 In her bower did she find her weaving a web full high and wide ;
 Twofold was the pall of Queen Helen, and gleamed on its purple pride
 Many battles of horse-quelling Trojans and mailed Achaian bands,
 Toils they endured for her sake at the War-god's pitiless hands.
 And Iris the swift-footed spake, as she glided to Helen's side :

“ Hither away, thou shalt look upon gallant deeds, dear bride,
 Deeds by the horse-quelling Trojans and mailed Achaians wrought,
 They that in days overpast in woeful warfare fought
 In the plain, with the lust of the battle, the man-destroyer, filled :
 But now are they sitting in silence, the din of the onset is stilled ;
 On their shields are they leaning, and stand beside them their lances tall. 135
 And Paris and Arês-beloved Menelaus amidst of them all
 With the spears long-shafted shall battle for thee, even thee, this day.
 And the hero that overcometh shall call thee his wife for aye.”

So speaking the Goddess thrilled her with yearning sweet and strong
 For the husband of old, for the city and parents forsaken long. 140

Straightway the silvery-shining folds of her veil did she don,
 And she passed from her bower, the while the tears in her soft eyes shone ;
 Not alone, there were handmaids twain that moved by Helen's side,
 Aithrē the daughter of Pittheus, and Klymenē lovely-eyed.

And straightway they came to the place where rose the Scaean gate : 145

There Priam the ancient king with Thymoites and Panthous sate,
 Lampus and Klytius withal, Hiketaon the War-god's seed,
 Antenor the wise, and Ukalegon mighty in council-rede.

There at the Skaian gate were the people's elders set,
 Eld-wasted in war-might, but wisdom in counsel abode with them yet. 150

And the sound of their piping voices was like the cicala's cry
 As it rings out shrill through the wood from the tree where she sitteth on high.
 So there upon Troytown's tower sat grey-haired prince and peer :
 And they lifted their eyes, and beheld Queen Helen drawing anear ;
 And each unto other the light-winged words full softly spoke : 155

“ No marvel that Trojans and goodly-harnessed Achaian folk
 Long time should have borne tribulation for such a woman as this.
 How wondrous like to a deathless Goddess in face she is !
 Howbeit, though never so lovely she be, in the ships let her go,
 Neither leave unto us and our children a heritage of woe.” 160

So spake they, but Priam uplifted his voice, and to Helen he cried :
 “ Hither come to the front, dear child, sit down by the old man's side,
 And so shalt thou look on thine husband of old, on thy friends, and thy kin,
 —Nay, nay, 'tis the Gods have done it : not thine I account the sin : [165]
 For they brought up against me Achaia, the war and the tears and the grief,—

And shalt tell me of yonder captain, and name that battle-chief,
 That hero amidst the Achaians stalwart and great to see.
 Good sooth, there be others that tower by the whole head taller than he :
 But so goodly a man mine eyes looked never upon ere now,
 Neither any so worship-worthy : he seemeth a king, I trow.”

170

And Helen the woman divine made answer to him, and she said :
 “Honoured art thou in mine eyes, dear sire of my lord, and dread :—
 Ah had I chosen but death, yea, an evil death, in the hour
 When I followed thy son, and forsook mine acquaintance, my bridal bower,
 And my daughter, my best-beloved, and the sweet girls, playmates mine ! ” 175
 Woe’s me ! it was not to be : and for this do I weep and pine.
 But this will I tell thee whereof thou enquirest and askest of me :
 Atreus’ son Agamemnon the wide-dominioned is he,
 A noble king, and withal a spearman battle-keen,
 And was brother to shameless me—yea, this strange thing hath been ! ” 180

And the old man gazed, and he marvelled, and brake forth there into praise :
 “O happy Atreides, fair-fated ! O blest in the lot of thy days !
 What hosts of the sons of Achaia be bowed beneath thine hand !
 Time was when I went into Phrygia the vine-abounding land ; [185]
 There saw I the Phrygians, the horsemen swift-darting as birds on the wing,
 Warrior-thousands of Otreus and Mygdon the godlike king.
 Far down by Sangarius’ waters the tents of their host were arrayed.
 I also was numbered amongst them, I and my warrior-aid,
 In the day of the Amazon terror, when came the maids of war :
 Yet fewer were these than the flashing-eyed sons of Achaia are.”

190

Then the old king looked on Odysseus, and once again asked he :
 " Yet tell me withal, dear child, who yonder chief shall be.
 By the head is he lesser of stature than Atreus' kingly son.
 But in shoulders and chest, I trow, is he broader to look upon.
 His harness of battle is laid upon earth's all-fostering floor,
 But himself like a lord of the flock goeth ranging the war-ranks o'er.
 Yea, he seemeth to me as a ram wool-wealthy, the stately beast
 That paceth amidst of the ewes of the great flock silver-fleeced."

And Helen to him made answer, the daughter of Zeus spake on :
 " Lo, this is Odysseus the mighty in counsel, Laertes' son,
 Who was nurtured in Ithaca's land, mid the crags of a rugged isle,
 Cunning in dark devices, a weaver of webs of guile."

And Antenor the hoary-wise made answer thereunto :
 " Yea, princess, surely the word thou hast spoken is utter-true ;
 For Odysseus the godlike came hitherward once on a time oversea,
 And stout Menelaus withal, on an ambassage touching thee.
 And I welcomed them into mine halls, and I gave them the guest-fare due,
 And I marked their bodily presence, the thoughts of their hearts I knew.
 Now when these twain stood with the Trojans that into the folkmote pressed,
 The shoulders of lord Menelaus towered above the rest ;
 But when they had sat them down was Odysseus the kingliest.
 When the weaving of word-weft began, and they uttered their rede to our folk,
 With a rush as of feet in the race came the words Menelaus spoke.
 Little he said, but his voice rang clear, for he multiplied not [shot. 215
 His words, though the younger he was, neither wide of the mark were they

But when came the time for Odysseus the manifold-counselled to rise,
 He stood with his face bowed down, and earthward he bent his eyes ; [sight,
 And he waved not his sceptre to rearward, he stretched it not forth in our
 But moveless it drooped in his hands,—thou hadst deemed him a witless wight:
 Thou hadst said ‘ He is anger-sullen, he troweth nothing aright.’ 220
 But so soon as the sound of his mighty voice from his deep chest rose,
 And the storm of his fast-coming words like the drift of the wintertide snows,
 Then no man might strive with Odysseus in counsel-rivalry,
 And we marvelled no more at his glory, nor counted him poor to see.”

Then of Aias the old king asked, as he marked him afar from the wall : 225
 “ And who shall be yonder Achaian, the hero stately and tall
 Who towers by shoulders and head above the Argives all ? ”

Spake Helen the royally-robed, the goddess-woman, again :
 “ Aias the giant is this, war-fence of Achaian men.
 Beyond, mid his Cretan array, as a god doth Idomeneus stand, 230
 And around him be gathered the chiefs of his Cretan battle-band.
 Him did the War-god’s friend Menelaus ofttimes greet
 As a guest in our halls, what time soever he came from Crete.
 Now the rest of the hawk-eyed sons of Achaia, I see them all,
 Their faces are unforgotten, their names can I well recall. 235
 But two arrayers of warfolk mine eyes have nowise found,
 Castor the queller of steeds, Polydeukēs the fist-renowned.
 Mine own blood-brethren they are, one mother bare them with me.
 Is it so, that from dear Lacedaemon they came not with these oversea,
 Or that in sooth in the sea-tracking galleys they hitherward came, 240

But stand not amidst of the war-press of heroes for very shame,
For dread of the scoffs and the manifold mocks at a sister's name?"

As she spake, in the strait embraces of Earth all-mother they lay,
In their own dear fatherland soil, Lacedaemon far away.

[245]

Through the town with the Gods' oath-victims then did the heralds fare;
Two lambs, and the fruit of the earth, heart-gladdening wine, they bare
In a goat-skin vessel, and passed the herald Idaius on;
In his hands the burnished bowl and the golden chalices shone.
And he hasted the ancient king, and to Priam thus spake he:

"Son of Laomedon, rise; the princes are calling for thee:
Horse-quelling Trojans and mailed Achaians are tarrying there
Till thou come down into the plain the covenant-oaths to swear.
For thy son Alexander and Arès-beloved Menelaus in strife
Shall close with the spears long-shafted to win Queen Helen to wife.
And whoso prevaleth, the bride shall be his, and the treasure-store; 255
And the nations shall plight them with oaths, and in friendship be joined once
And in Troyland in peace shall we dwell, and they shall return full fain [more,
To Achaia the land of the lovely, to Argos the horse-fed plain."

Then the old king shuddered, howbeit he spake to his henchman-band
To yoke the steeds to the car, and they swiftly obeyed his command. 260
Then he gat him up into the wain, and the reins in his hands he caught,
And beside him Antenor mounted the chariot beautiful-wrought.
And the steeds through the Skaian gateway down to the plain drove they.
And it was so, that when they were come unto Troy's and Achaia's array,
They lighted down from the chariot on earth's all-bounteous face,

265

And on to the midst of the host of Achaia and Troy did they pace.
 Straightway uprose to his feet Agamemnon King of Men :
 Rose Odysseus the manifold-counselled : the lordly heralds then
 Mingled the wine in the bowl, to the altar the victims they led,
 And over the hands of the kings the lustral-water they shed. 270
 And his dagger the son of Atreus drew with his brawny hand,
 The blade that hung evermore by the sheath of his battle-brand.
 And he severed the locks from the heads of the lambs, and the heralds bare,
 Mid Trojan chiefs and Achaian parting the sacred hair.
 And amidst them Atreides uplifted his hands, and in prayer did he cry : 275
 "Zeus, Father, who dwellest in Ida, most glorious and most high,
 Thou Sun, who beholdest all things, and hear'st whatsoever is said,
 And ye Rivers, and Earth, and ye in the underworld of the dead
 Who punish the toil-fordone that have sworn and have broken their oath,
 Be witnesses ye, and the warders of this our covenant-troth. 280
 If so be Alexander the Trojan shall slay Menelaus in fight,
 Let him have Helen, let all that treasure be his of right.
 And we in our sea-tracking galleys again will homeward go.
 But and if bright-haired Menelaus shall lay Alexander low,
 The Trojans shall yield up Helen and all that wealth straightway, 285
 And a recompense to the Argives, such as is meet, shall they pay,
 Even such as shall still be accepted by them of the unborn day.
 But if by Priam and Priam's children the victory-right
 Be denied unto me when the prince Alexander hath fallen in fight,
 Then will I battle to get me requital for this their sin, 290

Tarrying here, until to the end of my warfare I win."

So spake he, and severed the throats of the lambs with the pitiless brass,
And he laid them down on the ground, and forth did the life-tide pass
As they quivered and gasped, for the brass had reft their strength away :
And into the chalices out of the bowl the wine poured they :

295

And they put up their prayer to the Gods that in life everlasting abide.
And thus from the midst of Achaians and Trojans a deep voice cried :

" O Zeus most glorious and mighty, ye Deathless, defend the right !
Which nation soever shall first transgress this covenant-plight,
Be the brains of them spilt on the earth as yonder wine this day,
Even theirs and their children's, their wives be made the ravisher's prey !"

So prayed they ; howbeit Kronion would not yet bring it about.
And amidst of the war-host Priam Dardanus' son spake out :

" Hearken, ye Trojans and goodly-harnessed Achaian men :
As for me, I will turn back now unto Ilium the windy again,
Forasmuch as I may not endure with mine eyes to behold this sight,
My dear son grappling with Arès-beloved Menelaus in fight.
Ah, Zeus and the rest of the Deathless know, and none beside,
Unto which of the twain the death-doom end is decreed to betide."

So spake he, and laid on the chariot the lambs that Atreides slew ;
Then mounted the godlike man, and the reins through his fingers he drew.
And Antenor sat by his side in the beautiful-fashioned wain ;
And back from the host to the ramparts of Ilium rode these twain.

But Hector the son of Priam and godlike Odysseus straight
Paced out the ground for the duel, and measured the lists of fate.

315

Then laid they the lots in a helmet of brass, and they shook them, to know
Which warrior first should hurl with his brass-headed lance at the foe.

And the multitude prayed, and uplifted their hands to the Gods on high :
And thus from the midst of Achaians and Trojans did voices cry : [320]

“ Zeus Father most glorious and mighty, O hearken from Ida thy throne !
Whichsoever of these 'twixt nation and nation this mischief hath sown,
Vouchsafe that he perish and pass unto Hades' halls of night,
But for us may there be lovingkindness and faithful covenant-plight.”

Great Hector the splendour-helmed now shaketh the morion about,
Looking backward, and suddenly leapeth the token of Paris thereout. 325

Then row upon row the folk sit down where the pawing steeds
Stand chafing, and earth is agleam with the sheen of battle-weeds.
Thereafter in fair bright harness of fight his shoulders dressed
Alexander the godlike, the lord of Helen the lovely-tressed.

First unto his legs did he lay the greaves fair-glittering, 330
Clasping the ankle around with the burnished silver ring.

Thereafter about his bosom the fence of the corslet he dight,
His brother Lykaon's, howbeit it fitted his body aright.

And the belt of his brazen war-glaive silver-bestarred he flung
Over his shoulder, his broad stout buckler thereafter he slung. 335
On his goodly head his well-wrought helmet he settleth now :
Terribly nodded the mane of the crest overglooming his brow.
Firm in his hand like the grasp of a friend is the mighty spear.
Menelaus the dauntless withal hath arrayed him in battle-gear.

So when they had girt on their harness amidst of their folk, straightway 340

They strode forth into the midst 'twixt Troy's and Achaia's array
 With terribly-glaring eyes, and amazement seized each one,
 Both horse-quelling Trojans and mailèd Achaians that looked thereon.
 Now in the measured lists stand wronger and wronged full nigh :
 Quiver the spears in their hands as the battle-wrath flames high. 345

First flew Alexander's lance long-shafted across the field ;
 And it smote on the round fair-shapen of lord Menelaus' shield.
 Bent was the point of it backward ; it might not prevail to burst
 Through the stubborn fence of the targe : then sprang forth vengeance-athirst
 Menelaus Atreides, and cried unto Zeus Allfather first : 350

“ King Zeus, vouchsafe me to punish the man that hath worked me woe :
 Beneath mine hand do thou lay Alexander the traitor low,
 That all men may tremble, yea, such as are yet to be born, to requite
 The guest-receiver with wrong, and to do lovingkindness despite.”

Then he swung up his lance long-shafted, and hurled it across the field ; 355
 And it smote on the fair-fashioned round of the son of Priam's shield.
 Crashed through the glittering buckler the great spear's thunderbolt-head,
 And it stayed not, but on through the curious work of the corslet it sped.
 Through his tunic it shore ; by his flank cold-sliding it went full nigh
 To the life, but he swerved aside, and the black death passed him by. 360

Then his battle-brand drew Menelaus, bestarred with the silver white,
 And he smote on the crest of his helmet, but shivered to left and to right
 Clashing and clanging afar from his hand did the shards of it fly.
 And Atreides looked up to the heavens, and he cried with a bitter cry :
 “ O Zeus Allfather, none else of the Gods is so cruel as thou ! 365

I deemed I had gotten revenge for my foe's foul wrong but now. [shot
 But behold, in my grasp is my battle-brand shivered: my lance hath been
 Forth of mine hand on a bootless flight; it hath slain him not!"

Then he sprang on him, seizing the horse-manè over his crest thick-tossed,
 And wrenching him round 'gan hale him away to Achaia's host. 370

And the broidered strap strained hard at his throat, that he gasped for breath,
 Even the helmet-clasp that was buckled his chin beneath.

And now had he dragged him a captive, and won unmeasured renown,
 But the daughter of Zeus, Aphroditê, with eager glance looked down;
 And she snapped in his bitter need that stubborn bull's hide band, 375

And the helmet sprang from his head in Atreides' brawny hand.
 But with one swift turn of his wrist the hero hath hurled it aside
 To Achaia's array, to the hands of his comrades true and tried.

Then he turned him, and leapt on his enemy, furious-fain to slay
 With the brazen spear—but lo, Aphroditê snatched him away 380

With the effortless strength of a Goddess, and veiled him in viewless air;
 And cradled in cloud to the cedar and scent of his bower she bare.

And she hied her to bring thither Helen: she found that lady bright
 Amidst of a throng of the daughters of Troy on the gate-tower's height.
 And the princess's nectar-breathing robe with her hand she shook; 385

But or ever she spake the form of an ancient woman she took,
 A distaff-handmaid;—in Sparta before that shame befell
 Fair fleeces she spun for her lady, and loved her passing well.

So seemed Aphroditê the Goddess, and softly murmured she:
 " Hither away to thine home: Alexander calleth for thee. 390

In the bridal chamber he is, on the wondrous-carven bed,
In splendour of beautiful raiment, in glory of goodlihead.

Thou wouldest say he was nowise returned from deadly strife with a foe, [ago.]
But was bound for the dance, or had ceased from the dance but a mōment

Thrilled by her voice was the soul of the lady, and Helen turned, 395
And the neck exceeding fair of a Goddess her eyes discerned,
And the bosom of all desire, and the deep love-lightening eyes ;
And astonished was Helen the Queen, and she spake in indignant wise :

“ O tyrant, why must thine enchantments be dragging me ever down !
What, wilt thou hale me thy captive again unto some fair town, 400
Some city in Phrygia-land or Maeonia’s lovely lea,
If perchance there too thou hast found thee a minion that waiteth for me !
Since now Menelaus hath vanquished the prince Alexander in strife,
And looketh to lead me home, the false, the hateful wife.

For this cause comest thou hither, O treacherous-hearted, now ? 405
Nay, go thou, sit by his side, and forsake the heaven-path thou,
And never again turn back with thy feet to Olympus’ steep,
But pour out thine heart upon him, and thy darling in love-ward keep,
Till he stoop to thee, call thee his wife, or in scorn look down on his thrall !
But I, I will not go—indignant were all men if this should befall— 410
To be handmaid unto his couch : they will all cry shame upon me,
The daughters of Troy :—yea, now is mine heart all misery.”

Then in wrath Aphroditē made answer, and thus did the Goddess say :
“ Provoke me no more, rash fool, lest in anger I cast thee away,
And according to this my love be the measure of that mine hate, 415

And I load thee with loathing of nation and nation, a bitter weight,
Of Trojans and Danaans : then shalt thou die by an evil fate ! ”

So spake she : at that stern threat did Helen the Zeus-born quail.
Silently veiled she her face with her silver-shimmering veil, [420
And she followed the Goddess, and none of the daughters of Troy was ware.
So they came unto Prince Alexander’s palace exceeding fair.
To the toils of the spindle and loom her handmaids turned them in haste ;
But she, the lady divine, to her high-ceiled chamber paced.
And for her Aphroditê the laughter-winsome a high-seat bare,
And overagainst Alexander the Goddess set that chair. 425
Thereon sat Helen the child of Zeus the Aegis-lord ;
But she turned her eyes away with a bitter-scornful word : [died
“ Thou hast come from the battle !—O better it were if therein thou hadst
Overborne by the hero that took me in days overpast for his bride.
Ha ! thou wert wont to boast that by might of thine hands and thy spear 430
Thou wert stronger than Prince Menelaus whom Arêš holdeth dear !
Go then—ay, go and defy Menelaus again to the fray :
Man against man bid the Arêš-belovèd to meet thee !—nay,
I bid thee forbear, even I, for I would not have thee dare
To the deadly strife of the battle the prince of the golden hair, 435
Lest haply he smite thee to death, lest his spear overmaster thee there.”

And Paris with soft words answered and spake unto Helen the Queen :
“ Ah lady, upbraid not : thy scorn on mine heart smiteth heavy and keen.
Menelaus hath gotten the victory now through Athénê’s aid ;
Howbeit my day shall come, for with us too Gods be arrayed. 440

—Nay come, let us couch us for love's delight, even I and thou ;
 For never the net of desire so tangled my soul as now ;
 No, not when from fair Lacedaemon at first I snatched thee away,
 And afar in the sea-swift galleys bare that loveliest prey,
 And in Kranaë's isle we embraced, and heart into heart beat fire, 445
 It was not with the love of to-day, with the rapture of this my desire."

He spake, and prevailed, and she followed as on to the couch he led ;
 So these twain laid them adown on the curious-carven bed.

But Atreides ranged through the press like a wild beast to and fro,
 If so be he might anywhere spy Alexander the godlike, his foe. 450
 Yet could no man of Troy, no man of her war-aid battle-renowned,
 Show Arès-beloved Menelaus where might Alexander be found.

Yet not as for love that they bare had they hidden him, whoso had seen,
 For hated he was of them all with the hate of death, I ween.

Then cried in the midst of the war-hosts King Agamemnon, and said : 455

“ Hear me, ye Trojans and Dardans, and ye of their warrior-aid !
 With Arès-beloved Menelaus abideth the victory.

Yield Helen the Argive then, and the treasure that came oversea.
 And a recompense unto the wronged, even such as is meet, shall ye pay,
 Such as still shall be good in the eyes of the men of an unborn day.” 460

So spake Atreides, and shouted thereto the Achaian array.

BOOK IV.

How the Covenant was disannulled by the arrow of treachery, and the war-hosts closed in battle.

BUT the Gods were gathered the while with Zeus on the golden floor,
And they sat at the feast ; in their midst did the Lady Hêbê pour
The rose-flushed nectar-wine, and out of the goblets of gold
To each other they drank, looking down on the Trojans' battle-hold.
Straightway Kronion began with word-shafts glancing aslant 5
To provoke Queen Hérê to wrath, making mock with a heart-stinging taunt :
“ Of the Goddesses champions twain for the lord Menelaus there be,
Hérê of Argos, Athênê withal of Alalkomenê.
But lo, from his trouble afar are they sitting : their eyes have seen,
Yet they revel at ease, the while Aphroditê the Laughter-queen 10
Ever goeth beside her friend, that the doom-stroke come not nigh ;
Yea, now hath she snatched him away from the death that he looked to die.
Howbeit in fight Menelaus hath conquered, the War-god's friend :
Then take we counsel together how all these things shall end.
Once more to the bane of the battle, the horror of onset-yell, 15

Shall we rouse them, or rain lovingkindness adown, that in peace they may
 Now if this were well-pleasing to all, and good in the eyes of these, [dwell?
 Then might the waste desolations of Priam's city cease,
 And again Menelaus should lead home Helen of Argos in peace."

So spake he ; Athénê and Hérê in curbed wrath murmured low. 20
 Anigh to each other they sat, and they plotted the Trojans' woe.
 Now Athénê held her peace, and she answered him not a word,
 Yet against Allfather within her the tameless anger stirred.
 But the fury of Hérê would nowise be pent in her breast, and she said :

" What hast thou to do saying this, O Kronos' son most dread ? 25
 And wilt thou make mock of my labour, and bring mine endeavour to naught
 And the sweat of my grievous toil, when I wearied my steeds as I wrought
 To gather the war-folk for ruin of Priam and Priam's line ?
 Ay, work thy will—but the hearts of the Gods are not as thine ! "

Then wroth was the Cloudrack-sweeper, and answered indignantly : 30
 " Beshrew thee, what manifold evil have all these done unto thee,
 Even Priam and Priam's seed, that thine eye will nowise spare
 Till the dwellings of Troy shall be wasted, the city builded fair? [parts wide,
 Now I ween couldst thou burst through her gates, couldst thou scale her ram-
 Couldst thou gorge thee with flesh of King Priam and all that her strong walls
 His sons and his people, thy vengeance-hunger were satisfied ! 35 [hide,
 Do after thy pleasure—I would not that this our contention should be
 The seed of a bitter feud hereafter for thee and for me.
 Howbeit this thing will I tell thee, and deep in thine heart let it stay :—
 In the hour when I also shall steadfastly purpose in ruins to lay 40

Some city the children whereof be exceeding dear to thine heart,
 My fury shall have free course, thou shalt nowise withstand me nor thwart.
 For the thing that mine heart sore grudged unto thee have I freely given.
 For of cities beneath the sun and the star-bestudded heaven,
 Even all that the earth-abiders have builded far and near, 45
 Above all to my soul is Ilium the holy exceeding dear,
 And her king, and the people of Priam the lord of the mighty spear ;
 For that ever mine altar therein with the stintless feast hath been dight,
 Drink-offering and sacrifice-steam, for our honour is this and our right."

Answered and spake unto him Queen Hérê the lovely-eyed : 50
 " Three cities there are, more precious to me than all beside,
 Argos, and Sparta, Mycenae withal, the broad-wayed town :
 Whensoe'er they shall win thine hatred, in ruin cast them down.
 I murmur not, not for their sake in the path of thy wrath do I stand ; [55
 Yea, though I begrudged thee thy vengeance, and bade thee stay thine hand,
 Naught should my murmurs avail, seeing thou art mightier far.
 Yet ill were it done in thee if my toil thou shouldst utterly mar,
 Seeing I am a God as thou art, of the selfsame lineage I came,
 Chief daughter of Kronos, the Lord of unsearchable counsels, I am ;
 Chief by my birthright, and chief, in that mine is the pride of place 60
 To be called thy Queen, who art King over all the deathless race.
 Now therefore as touching this let us each unto other yield,
 I unto thee, and thou unto me, and the thing shall be sealed
 Of the rest of the Deathless, and thou to Athénê give thy command
 Thither to speed where the hosts of Troy and Achaia stand, 65

And to stir up the warriors of Troy, that they be the first to smite
The battle-triumphant Achaians, transgressing the covenant-plight."

Then the Father of Gods and men denied not Hérê's request.
Straightway to Athénê he spake the swift-winged word of his hest :
" Forthright to the hosts of Troy and Achaia speed thy flight,
And stir up the warriors of Troy that they be the first to smite
The battle-triumphant Achaians, transgressing the covenant-plight." 70

Enkindled the more by his word was Athénê the eager-hearted : [darted.
She hath flashed from the peaks of Olympus, and down to the earth hath she
And as when from the hands of the Kronos-begotten falleth a star,
A sign unto seafaring folk, or to some wide host of war,
And forth from the splendour thereof is a fountain of fire-spray leaping,
Even such was the likeness of Pallas Athénê earthward sweeping.
And into their midst she sprang, and astonished were all at the sight,
Horse-quelling Trojans and sons of Achaia harness-dight. 75
And thus spake this one and that to his fellow that stood thereby :

" Once more shall the bane of the battle, the horror of onset-cry,
Arise ; or at last lovingkindness 'twixt nation and nation shall be
From Zeus, for the steward of war and of peace unto menfolk is he."

So murmured the voices the host of Achaians and Trojans among. 85
But she in a man's shape entered the Trojans' battle-throng.
For the form of spear-mighty Laodokus, son of Antenor, she bare,
And for godlike Pandarus sought, if so be she might find him there.
And she found where the son of Lykaon, the princely and stalwart, stood,
Begirt by the ranks of his spearmen, a mighty battle-wood, 90

Even they that from streams of Aisêpus had come to the war for his sake.
So she came to the hero's side, and the light-winged word she spake :

“ Wilt thou hearken, O war-wise son of Lykaon, to this my rede ?—
Wilt thou dare against king Menelaus thy swift-winged arrow to speed ?
Of all the Trojans then shouldst thou win thee thanks and renown, 95
And chief above all Alexander the Prince thy deed should crown ;
Of his hand first before all should glorious gifts be thine,
If so be he shall see Menelaus, the hero of Atreus' line,
Slain by thy shaft, on the height of the death-pyre compassed with flame.
Then draw thou against Menelaus, the captain of battle-fame, 100
And vow to the Light-begotten, the Bow-renowned, to slay
A glorious hecatomb, all of the firstling lambs, in the day
When home to the city of holy Zeleia thou winnest thy way.”

Then by Athênê's words was his witless soul overborne.
Straightway he drew forth his bow of the rock-goat's polished horn. 105
For once, when the wild crag-leaper rose against the sky
On the crest of a scaur, from his ambush beneath the prince let fly,
And there on its back 'on the rock with the shaft in its heart did it lie.
In sixteen palms was the length of the horns of the quarry told ;
And the craftsman knit them together, and shaped to the perfect mould 110
Of a bow, and he burnished the same, and he tipped the ends with gold.
So Pandarus strung that bow, and he heedfully laid it along
On the ground, and in front of him closed the shields of his henchman-throng,
Lest the warrior sons of Achaia should leap to their feet, and set on,
Or ever the arrow should smite Menelaus, Atreus' son. 115

He hath lifted the lid of his quiver, a shaft never shot hath he ta'en ;
 Black Agony writhed on the barbs, on the feathers was shuddering Pain :
 Forthright on the bowstring he laid it, the arrow's bitter bane ;
 And he vowed to the Light-begotten, the Bow-renowned, to slay
 A glorious hecatomb, all of the firstling lambs, in the day 120
 When home to the city of holy Zeleia he won his way.

The notch of the shaft hath he gripped with the strong bull-sinew, and now
 The bowstring toucheth his breast, and the steel head kisseth the bow :
 And now by his uttermost might is the great bow strained to a ring—
 Clangeth the horn and singeth the sinew as forth from the string 125
 Leapt on the foemen the arrow keen-whetted with eager wing.

Yet the bliss-throned deathless Gods, Menelaus, forgat thee not ;
 And chiefly the Prey-giver, daughter of Zeus, for thy need took thought.
 For she came and she turned aside the keen shaft's murderous leap,
 Just swept it away from his flesh, as a watching mother might sweep 130
 A fly from the face of her child as it lieth in sweet-hushed sleep.
 And her hand sped it on to the place where the buckles golden-hasped
 Of the baldric met, and the mail overlapped, by the sword-belt clasped.
 Into the baldric it plunged, that bitter arrow-head,
 On through the curious work of the baldric unswerving it sped : 135
 On through the breastplate cunningly-graven lo it hath passed,
 And the taslet that shielded the flesh of the warrior from javelin-cast,—
 And herein was his chiefest defence,—howbeit through this did it win ;
 And the point of the arrow pierced but the face of the warrior's skin,
 And straightway forth of the wound came dark blood trickling thin. 140

As a battle-steed's cheekpiece is stained with the crimson of Morningland,
 Ivory dyed by Maeonian or Carian woman's hand ;—
 In a chamber it lieth, while many a hero coveteth sore
 To win it, but long shall it lie mid a great king's treasure-store
 For the pride of his charioteer and his war-steed's gallant show ;— 145
 So seemed, Menelaus, thy limbs, overstreamed with the blood's red flow
 Thy shapely thighs to the knees, and thine ankles fair therebelow.

Shuddered thereat Agamemnon the war-folk's battle-lord,
 When he saw how the darkening crimson fast from the wound outpoured :
 Shuddered the prince Menelaus, beloved of the God of the Sword. 150
 Yet he looked and he spied how the cord and the barbs stood forth of the flesh,
 And his spirit revived in his breast and his courage was kindled afresh.
 But heavily sighing amidst of them Lord Agamemnon spake,
 Grasping his brother's hand, and a sigh from his war-fellows brake :

“ Dear brother, for death unto thee did I seal that covenant-plight, 155
 Sending thee forth for Achaians alone against Trojans to fight.
 Lo how the Trojans have smitten thee !—oaths underfoot have they thrust.
 Yet no vain thing is an oath, nor the lambs' blood spilt in the dust,
 Nor the wine, nor the hand's troth-clasp, wherein they had caused us to trust.
 For though the Olympian refrain him, that traitors have respite a day, 160
 At the last shall he smite them for all, and the debt manifold shall they pay :
 On their heads shall it be, on their wives and their babes the destruction shall
 For I know this thing in mine heart, and my soul is a seer of their doom—[come ;
 The day wherein Ilium the holy shall perish will come : it is near
 Unto Priam withal, and the folk of the king of the ashen spear. 165

And Zeus that abideth in heaven, Kronion enthroned over all,
 Shall brandish above them his aegis, a blackness of thundercloud-pall,
 In his wrath for a nation's treason : without fail this shall befall.
 But, O Menelaus, on me sore anguish for thee shall come
 If thou die, if thou fill up the measure to-day of thy life-days' doom. 170

Shamed above all men to Argos the thirst-land again should I turn ;
 For the sons of Achaia forthright for their fatherland-home will yearn.
 We shall leave unto Troy and her king the boast and the triumph-scorn
 Over Helen the Argive, and here shall thy bones lie rotting forlorn [175]
 In the earth, without fruit of thy toil and the burden of war thou hast borne.
 And a pride-uplifted Trojan shall cry in the day of our shame,
 As he leaps on the tomb of Atreides the lord of battle-fame :
 'Would God Agamemnon's revenges so bravely might speed evermore
 As when now he hath led the host of Achaia in vain to our shore,
 And back to the land of his fathers is fled with them over the wave 180
 With empty ships, and hath left Menelaus the stalwart and brave !'
 So shall they mock—that day let the earth gape wide for my grave."

Then Menelaus the bright-haired heartened his brother and spoke :
 "Nay, be of good cheer, and dismay not yet the Achaian folk.
 The bitter-keen point of the arrow hath pierced no mortal part, 185
 For the glancing baldric hath checked it ; below, my defence from the dart
 Was the kilt and the taslet of proof, strong-wrought by the coppersmith's art."

Answered and spake Agamemnon, the nations' battle-lord :
 "Would God it might be, Menelaus, according to this thy word ! [190]
 But the leech shall lay hands on thy wound, and shall measure the arrow-bane,

And thereover his balms shall he spread to assuage thy bitter pain."

Then he cried to Talthybius the godlike, the herald, and thus spake he :

" Haste thee, Talthybius, haste thee, bid hither Machaon to me,

The hero-son of the Healer, Asklepius the leech of might,

To look upon Atreus' son Menelaus the warrior wight,

195

Whom some one hath shot with an arrow, a cunning man with the bow,

Some Trojan or Lycian, for glory to him, for our mourning and woe."

So spake he, and hearkened the herald, nor stayed from obeying his hest,
 But in haste through the brazen-harnessed array of Achaia he pressed,
 Glancing this way and that for Machaon the hero; and now hath he spied 200
 Where he stood with the shielded ranks of his men upon either side,
 Strong war-folk that followed him far from Trikkē's horse-fed lea;
 And Talthybius came to his side, and the light-winged word spake he :

" Up, son of Asklepius, Lord Agamemnon calleth thee hence
 To see Menelaus the hero, Achaia's battle-fence, 205
 Whom some one hath shot with an arrow, a cunning man with the bow,
 Some Trojan or Lycian, for glory to him, for our mourning and woe."

So spake he, and leapt in his bosom his heart as it thrilled with pain;
 And away through the wide war-host of Achaia they went, they twain.
 And they came unto where Menelaus the bright-haired stood in his blood, 210
 And around him on every hand Achaia's mightiest stood:
 And there in their midst was the godlike healer or ever they knew.
 Forthwith from the harness-clasping baldric the arrow he drew;
 And even as he plucked it aback the keen barbs snapped asunder.
 He unbuckled the glancing baldric, he loosened the kilt thereunder,

215

And the taslet, the mail which the coppersmith's hands had forged so well.
 But so soon as he looked on the wound, where the bitter arrow fell,
 He sucked forth the blood, and balms thereover with leechcraft skill
 Did he spread, the which Cheiron had given to his sire of his heart's good will.

220

While round Menelaus the battle-helper gathered they,
 Near came the Trojans and nearer, the ranks of their shield-array ;
 So the heroes did on them their war-gear, their hearts leapt up to the fray.
 Then hadst thou seen Agamemnon the godlike not slumbering in sleep,
 Neither cowering as cowereth the craven, nor loth for the onset-sweep,
 But exceeding fain of the battle, athirst for the glory of war ; 225
 For he lighted adown from his chariot of horses, his brass-flashing car,
 While his henchman reined them snorting a little aloof for a space,
 Eurymedon,—him Ptolemaius begat, of Peiraieus' race ;—
 For he charged him exceeding straitly to have them at hand, whensoe'er
 His limbs should be weary with marshalling all those thousands there. 230
 But himself on his feet through rank after rank of the heroes is gone ;
 And whomso he marked of the fleet-horsed Danaans fain to set on,
 Before them he stood and he heartened them, blithe were his words and bold :
 “ Argives, forget not your prowess, the gallant spirit of old !
 For the liars shall have no help of Zeus Allfather now, 235
 Seeing they were the first that transgressed the oath and the covenant-vow ;
 Therefore the vultures shall rend their tender flesh for a prey,
 And their dear-loved wives and their nursling babes will we bear away
 In our ships, when we smite yon ramparts of pride in the triumphing day.”
 But whomso he marked hanging back from the terrible battle and stern, 240

Hotly he chode them, and fierce did the flame of his anger burn :

“ Will ye ne’er be ashamed, tongue-fighters of Argos, reproach of your land ! Wherefore in palsy of terror-amazement, like fawns, do ye stand, Like fawns that the hunters have wearied, o’er leagues of the plain as they fled,

Till fainting they stand, and their spirit within them is utterly dead ? ” 245

So stand ye in palsy of terror-amazement,—ye fight not, ye !

Will ye wait till the Trojans draw nigh where the tall ships fringe the sea With their stately sterns looking down on the sands with the foam overdriven, To see if Kronion o’er cowards will stretch forth his arm out of heaven ? ”

So ranged he through ranks of the heroes, so marshalled them on to the And he came as he fared through the press to the Cretan war-array. [fray. 250

Round war-wise Idomeneus, girded with harness of battle, they stood ;

In the forefront Idomeneus, grim as a wild boar out of the wood,

And Meriones with the rearward was kindling the battle-mood.

And King Agamemnon beheld, and his spirit with gladness was stirred, ” 255

And cheerly he cried to Idomeneus, hailed him with kindly word :

“ Idomeneus, most of the fleet-horsed Danaans honour I thee,

Be it in battle, or labour, what toil soever it be,

Yea, or the feast, where the mightiest Argives gladden their soul

With the flame-flushed wine of the princes that flasheth within the bowl. ” 260

For what though the rest of the long-haired men of Achaia-land

Drink but by measure, by thee doth the brimming wine-cup stand

To quaff whensoever thy soul is fain, as by me, evermore.

Up then to the battle, and prove thee the hero unblenching of yore ! ”

Answered Idomeneus lord of the Cretans, and thus spake he :

” 265

"Atreides, thy warfellow trusty and true will I verily be,
 Even as aforetime I pledged me, and sealed it by covenant-sign.
 But go thou and kindle Achaia's long-haired battle-line,
 That we linger no more from the fight, for as water is spilt on the ground
 The Trojans have spilled the oaths, and for this shall their sorrows abound, 270
 And their deaths, who have broken the covenant-bond wherewithal we were

So spake he, and on passed Atreides, and glad washis heart and proud ; [bound.]
 And he found the Aiantes twain, as he fared through the warrior-crowd : [cloud.
 They were donning their war-gear, and footmen were with them, a battle-storm-
 And as when from the height of a headland outlooking a goatherd hath seen 275
 A cloud coming over the sea with the blast of the West-wind therein,
 And blacker it sheweth and blacker, as pitch, as he gazeth from far,
 Overglooming the sea, and within it the wings of the hurricane are ;
 And he shuddereth to see, and he driveth his flock to a cave in his dread ;
 So seemed they, the men god-strengthened, around the Aiantes that sped 280
 Onward in serried battalions dark-heaving to murderous war,
 A darkness where shield-flashes lightened and flicker of spears shivered o'er.
 And Lord Agamemnon beheld, and his spirit with gladness was stirred,
 And he lifted his voice unto these, and he uttered the swift-winged word :

"Aiantes, ye chiefs of the brazen-harnessed Argive band, 285
 How should I bid you bestir you ?—to you have I no command,
 Who be instant in bidding your people to quit them valiantly.
 Ah Zeus Allfather, Athénê, Apollo, that this might be,
 That the selfsame spirit were found in the breasts of each and all !
 Soon under our hands should the city of Priam bow and fall, 290

And her pride should be led away captive, and ruined her god-built wall."

So spake he, and left them there, and to others he hasted him then :

And he came upon Nestor the ringing-voiced with the Pylian men,

Setting his folk in array and uprousing the battle-storm.

Round Alastor and Chromius they stood, and by Pelagon's giant form, 295

And with Haimon the chieftain, and Bias the shepherd of folk, stood they.

The horsemen and chariots he set in the front of his war-array,

And the footmen to rearward he marshalled, full many and valiant and strong,

For a bulwark of war ; but the cowards he herded amidst of the throng,

That each man perforce might fight, were he never so little fain. 300

To his horsemen the old king first gave charge, for he bade them rein

Their horses aback, and in nowise to plunge mid the tangle of fight—

"Let no man in pride of his chariot-prowess or bodily might

Dash forward afront of his fellows to clash with the Trojan foe,

Neither let any give back, for your strength shall be minished so. 305

But whoso in riding his chariot shall meet any foe's war-car,

Let him reach forth and thrust with his spear, for this shall be better by far.

In such wise were cities and walls overthrown by the valiant of old, [bold.]

With such wisdom as this and such courage their hearts were cunning and

So shouted the ancient king, with lore of the old wars wise : 310

And Lord Agamemnon beheld him with gladness-lightening eyes ;

And he lifted his voice, and to Nestor the light-winged word he addressed :

"Would God, old sire, that the heart strong-beating within thy breast [eld !

Were matched by the strength of thy knees, and thy might were unwasted of

But grey hairs come upon all men, and thy strength too have they quelled. 315

Ah that thou wert of the youths, and another were thus in thy stead!"

Answered him Nestor, Gerenia's chariot-champion, and said :
 "Atreides, good sooth I were fain if I might but again be so
 As I was in the day when I laid Ereuthalion the godlike low.
 Yet not all gifts unto all men the Gods give at once, I trow : 320
 I have looked on the days of my youth, grey hairs be mine heritage now.
 Yet still shalt thou find me with horsemen, and still will I give command ;
 For the staff of the lordship of counsel is yet in the old man's hand.
 Nay, spears for the younger-born, whose prowess is not yet fled
 As mine, and their hearts are strong in the pride of their lustihead." 325

So spake he, and onward in gladness of heart went Atreus' seed
 Unto Peteos' scion Menestheus, the smiter of the steed.
 There stood he with warfolk of Athens, the kindlers of onset-cry ;
 And Odysseus the mighty in manifold counsel stood hard by.
 By his side Kephallenia's ranks—no feeble folk were they— 330
 Stood still, for not yet on their ears had fallen the shout of the fray.
 But the war-waves of horse-quelling Trojans and mailed Achaians but then
 'Gan surge in the battle-blast : therefore abode those valiant men ;
 And they tarried a space till another Achaian squadron first [335]
 Should charge on the armies of Troy, and the tempest of battle should burst.
 But Lord Agamemnon beholding them loiter was stirred to upbraid,
 And the winged words sprang from his passionate-panting lips, and he said :

"O child of a king god-fostered, Peteos' princely son,
 And thou, O perfect in guile-craft, wiliest-hearted one,
 Why cowering hang ye aback till the fight of the rest be begun ? 340

Is it not seemly that ye in the forefront of battle should stand
 Bearing the brunt of the strife when the flame of it fiercest is fanned ?
 For first before all men the banquet-bidding do ye twain hear
 Whensoe'er the Achaians prepare me the princes' feastful cheer.
 There is it still your delight to eat of the roast, and still 345
 To quaff of the beakers of honey-sweet wine, so oft as ye will.
 But now were ye well content though squadrons ten should pass
 From the host of Achaia before you to deal with the pitiless brass."

Dark-frowning made answer Odysseus the manifold-counselled, and said :
 "Atreides, what saying is this through the fence of thy teeth that hath fled ! 350
 We slack in the war !—whensoe'er the Achaians shall waken from sleep
 The War-god, and hurl on the Trojans in fury of onset-sweep,
 Thou shalt see, if thou wilt,—if thy spirit by deeds of the heroes is stirred,—
 Telemachus' father where loudest the thunder of meeting is heard
 With the horse-quelling foe—tush, even as wind is thine idle word !" 355

Then Lord Agamemnon smiled, and he spake to the man toil-proved,
 Unsaying the word of reproach, for he marked how his anger was moved :
 " O begotten of Zeus and Laertes, O master of subtlety,
 Think not I would chide such as thee above measure, nor lord it o'er thee.
 For I know what spirit is found in that true breast of thine : 360
 I know of the leal lovingkindness, and thy heart even as mine.
 Go to, we will yet make atonement for this unto thee, and if aught
 Hath been said that was ill in thy sight, may the Gods bring such unto naught."
 So spake he, and left them there, and to others he hasted on :
 And he found Diomedes the mighty-hearted Tydeus' son. 365

Still in the midst of his fair-fashioned chariots and horses he stood ;
 And beside him was Sthenelus standing, begotten of Kapaneus' blood.
 And Lord Agamemnon beholding him loiter was moved to upbraid,
 And the winged words sprang from his passionate-panting lips, and he said :

370

" Ha ! child of the horse-quelling hero, of Tydeus the king war-wise,
 Why dost thou glance up the lanes of the battle with shrinking eyes ?
 Not thus was it Tydeus' wont from the cry of the onset to cower ;
 Far afront of his fellows he charged on the foe in the perilous hour,
 As they that beheld him in battle-toil told, for it did not befall
 That ever I met him or saw, but men praised him for chiepest of all. 375

For he came on a day to Mycenae, yet not as for war to our land,
 But to help Polyneikês the godlike to gather a warrior-band
 For the host that should march unto Thêbê with god-built walls girt round ;
 And they strongly besought we would give of our war-aid battle-renowned.
 And our people were minded to give, and they pledged them to do as they prayed :
 But Zeus turned back our intent, sending tokens that made us afraid. [380]

So when they were gone from our halls, and afar on their way were sped,
 And were come to Aisôpus, the reed-hidden river of grassy bed,
 Then Tydeus was sent of the sons of Achaia before their face.
 So on ambassage went he, and came to the children of Kadmus' race 385

In the palace of strong Eteokles, and thronged was the feastful place.
 And Tydeus the war-steed-driver a stranger stood alone ;
 Yet he quailed not, for all that so many they were, and he but one.
 But he challenged them there to the athlete-strife, and the victor's meed
 Lightly he won, such a helper Athênê became in his need. 390

Then the Kadmeians, the goaders of horses, were kindled to wrath,
 And they spread the net of ambush amidst of his homeward path.
 Fifty, with captains twain, did they choose for the deed to be done,
 Even Maion the son of Haimon, a godlike-goodly one,
 Polyphontes the battle-bider withal, Autophonus' son.

395

Yet these against Tydeus availed not, but came on a shameful doom,
 For he slew them ; one only of all did he suffer to win safe home,
 Even Maion, for signs from the high Gods came, and he gave good heed.
 Ay, such was Aetolia's Tydeus : howbeit the hero's seed
 Is worser in fight, how better soever in folkmote-rede."

400

So spake he, and strong Diomedes nothing in answer said,
 Having respect to the high rebuke of the King most dread.
 But Kapaneus' glorious son with hot words made reply :

"Atreides, thou knowest the truth, what hast thou to do to lie ?
 Good sooth, we account us mightier men than our sires by far : 405
 Even we took Thêbê the great seven-gated burg of war.
 More strong was their wall than aforetime, and fewer were they of our band,
 But the high Gods' signs we obeyed, and the guiding of Zeus's hand.
 But our fathers' infatuate folly it was that cast them down :
 Therefore thou shalt not exalt against ours our sires' renown."

410

Dark-frowning made answer and spake unto him Diomedes the strong :
 "Lad, give thou heed unto me, and bridle thy malapert tongue !
 I have none indignation that King Agamemnon the shepherd of folk
 Should uprouse the Achaians, the armour-sheathed, to the onset-shock ;
 For on him shall the glory come down if so be the Achaians shall smite

415

The Trojans before them, and win proud Ilium's sacred height ;
 And his shall be anguish of soul if Achaia be smitten in fight.
 Now, ho for the prowess of old, for the storm of our battle-might !"

He spake, and adown from his car in his harness of battle he sprang ;
 Terribly clashed the brass on the breast of the hero, and rang,— 420
 Yea, even the valiant of heart might have quailed at the sharp fierce clang.

And as when on a sea-voice-ringing beach the surges are cast,
 Wave after wave driven up by the West's overmastering blast ;—
 In the outsea afar at the first it upheaveth,—anon down-crashing
 Bursts on the strand with its thunders, with arches of brine high-lashing 425
 The headlands, and spirits of the foam from the swinging wave-crests flashing ;
 So rank after rank they rolled onward, the Danaan men, to the war [more ;
 Without cease : through the trampling the cry of the captains rang out ever-
 But in silence the rest of them followed,—thou never hadst deemed, I trow,
 That so mighty a host with a voice in their breasts could be marching so,—430
 Hushed with the fear of their chiefs, and about them glanced and played
 The wavering sheen of the armour wherein were their squadrons arrayed.
 But the Trojans,—as sheep in the garth of a lord of pastured land
 In throngs upon countless throngs at the hour of milking stand, [435
 And they bleat evermore to the young lambs' quavering cry from the fold ;
 So over the wide war-host their mingled clamour rolled :
 For not one was the language of these, nor the speech of their lips the same,
 But confusion of tongues, forasmuch as from diverse lands they came.
 It was Arêς that sped these onward, Athênê the grey-eyed those,
 And Terror and Rout, and Strife mad-famishing ever for foes : 440

Sister she is and companion of Arês the murder-red ;
 Little of stature she showeth at first, but her towering head
 Soon smiteth the sky, while her feet on the earth amid menfolk tread.
 Now in the midst of the armies the Spirit of Hate hath she thrown, [moan.
 Through the war-throng sweeping, and doubling the anguish of men, and the
 Ever the mid-space narrowed, till closing they mingled, and then
 Clashed targets together, and spears, and the fury of brass-mailed men :
 Dashed each against other the boss-studded bucklers that strong arms bore,
 And the din shrieked up to the heaven, and roar was swallowed of roar ;
 And the agony-scream and the triumphing shout maddened up evermore 450
 From the slayers and them that they slew, and the earth ran streams of gore.
 And even as wintertide torrents down-rushing from steep hill-sides
 Hurl their wild waters in one where a cleft of the mountain divides,
 Till the floods of the mighty fountains pent in the deep gorge boil,
 And the shepherd afar on the mountains heareth the mad turmoil ; 455
 So from the bickering tangle came shouting and battle-toil.

First of the Trojans an armèd man did Antilochus smite,
 Echepôlus the son of Thalysius, who stood in the forefront of fight ;
 For he smote on the ridge of his helmet with horse-mane-crest overshed,
 And the lance pierced into his forehead, and crashed the brazen head 460
 Clean through the bone, and the veil of the death-mist darkened his sight :
 Down fell he as falleth a tower, in the giant-grapple of fight.
 On the foot of the fallen the lord Elephênor laid fast hold,
 Son of Chalkôdon, a chief of Abantians mighty-souled.
 From under the javelins he haled him, full eager to strip the mail 465

With such haste as he might from the corse,—short space did his striving
 For even as he dragged the body Agenor the great-heart spied [avail :
 How his buckler gave, as he stooped him, a glimpse of a fenceless side. [limb,
 There he stabbed with his brass-headed lance: limb fainted from nerveless
 As the life fluttered forth, and above him the toil and the strain waxed grim
 Of Achaian and Trojan : as wolves men leapt at the throats of their foes, [470
 While hero on reeling hero hailed down pitiless blows.

There Telamonian Aias smote Anthemion's son,

A strong man lusty with life, Simoeisius : years agone

From Ida his mother came down, and by Simois' banks she bore 475

That babe, when she fared with her parents to tell the sheep-flocks o'er.

Simoeisius for this was he named ; but to them that had given him birth

Never he rendered the nursing-debt back, for that short on the earth

Was his life on whom lighted the spear of Aias the mighty of heart ;

For even as he strode into fight to his right breast flashed that dart. 480

Clear through his shoulder the brass-heavy javelin leapt without stay ;

And he fell on the earth in the dust : as a poplar there he lay,

Like the tree that hath shot up high where a wide-spreading fen lieth low,

Smooth-stemmed, but its crest like a cloud-wreath afar up waves to and fro :

And this hath a wainwright felled with his axe of flame-bright steel 485

To bend him a felloe thereof for a fair-wrought chariot's wheel ;

And it lieth through many a day on the bank of the river to dry ;

Even so did Anthemion's son Simoeisius stricken lie

Before Aias the god-born : but Antiphus glancing in corslet-sheen,

A Priamid, hurled through the press at the slayer his javelin keen ; 490

But it missed him, and found out Odysseus' comrade true and tried,
 Leukus, smiting his groin as he haled the body aside :
 And he fell on the corse, and his hand unclenched the dead man's limb.
 Then Odysseus' wrath for his war-fellow waxed exceeding grim, [495]
 And he rushed through the forefighters harnessed in flame-bright brazen gear.
 Close up to the foemen he came, and he hurled with his glittering spear,
 Warily glancing about him, and shrank the Trojans in dread
 From the cast of the hero, nor vainly the lance of Odysseus was sped ;
 But it dashed a bastard son of Priam, Demokoön, down,
 Who had come to his help from the herds of his mares by Abydos-town. 500
 Him did Odysseus, in wrath for his friend, with the javelin-cast
 Smite on the temple, and on through its fellow-temple passed
 The brazen point, and his eyes were veiled with the death-mist-shroud.
 Heavily fell he, his war-gear above him clanged aloud.
 Then back drew the foremost, yea Hector the glorious faltered back. 505
 Loud shouted the Argives, and plucked forth their slain from the battle-wrack.
 On charged they afar : and Apollo was indignation-aflame
 From Pergamus gazing, and unto the Trojans his great voice came : [quail
 "On, horse-quelling Trojans ! blench not from the fight with the Argives, nor
 As though fashioned of stone were their flesh, or welded of steel, to avail 510
 To withstand the devouring sword and the storm of the javelin-hail.
 On !—for Achilles the child of Thetis the lovely-tressed
 Fights not, but broods by the ships on the wrath that is gall in his breast !"
 So cried from the city the terrible God ; but Achaia's array
 Zeus' daughter the glorious Trito-born cheered on to the fray, 515

Ever ranging the press, where hearts or hands grew slack that day.

Then Amarynkid Diôres in Fate's gin lay overthrown.

On his right leg hard by the ankle crashed a jagged stone.

And the hurler thereof was Peirous, lord of the Thracian host,

Imbrasus' son, who from Ainos had fared to the Troyland coast. 520

And the merciless rock-shard utterly crushed the sinews twain

And the bones, that backward down in the dust was he hurled amain

In his agony stretching his hands to his well-loved friends in vain,

Gasping his spirit forth : on he that had smitten him rushed, 525

And stabbed with his spear by the navel, and forth of the grim rent gushed

His bowels to the ground, and over his eyes death-darkness poured.

But as leapt the slayer aback, the spear of Aetolia's lord

Smote him above the pap, and stood in his lung blood-drenched.

Then sprang on him Thoas, and forth that massy spear he wrenched [slay, 530

From his breast, and he drew from the scabbard his sword keen-whetted to

And amidst of the belly he smote him, and reft his life away.

Yet he spoiled not his armour, for round him closed his henchman-band,

The crested Thracians, each with his long lance gripped in his hand ;

And tall though he was and stalwart and haughty-loth to yield,

Yet backward they bore him, and weight-overmastered the giant reeled. 535

So there in the dust outstretched they lay, those chiefs of pride,

Thracian and brazen-armoured Epeian side by side ;

And around them maddened the battle, and hero on hero died.

[to pass,

There none might make light of the toil, who should chance through its fury
Though unsmitten of arrow or dart, though unwounded of keen-whetted brass,

He might wander at will through the midst, with his hand in Athénê's own
Kind-clasped, though her arm were his shield from the onrush of javelin or
For many a man of Achaia and Troy on that wild day, [stone :
Outstretched on his face in the dust, by his foe in the death-peace lay.

BOOK V.

Concerning the battle-prowess of Tydeus' son Diomedes.

BHEN unto Tydeus' son Diomedes Athénê gave
Prowess and daring, that he 'mid the Argives' bravest the brave
Might shine forth battle-peerless, and win him a glorious name.
And she lit up his helm and his buckler with tireless-blazing flame,
Like the star of the latter summer, whose splendours brightest gleam 5
Mid the host of heaven, as it leaps from the baths of the Ocean-stream.
Such fire from his shoulders and head at her glamour-spell flashed out,
And into the midst she sped him, the heart of the battle-rout.

Now a man there was of the Troyfolk noble and well-to-do,
Darês the priest of Hephaestus the Fire-god, and sons he had two, 10
Phegeus, Idaius withal, right cunning in battle-lore.
These severed themselves from the war-press, and down on the hero they bore ;
They twain on a chariot, and he rushing onward with fast-flying feet.
So when they were now drawn nigh, each charging the foe to meet,
First from the hand of Phegeus the lance long-shafted was sped ; 15

But over Tydeides' shoulder to leftward the spear-point fled,
 That it smote not, and on rushed Tydeides with lance uplifted on high,
 And nowise in vain from his hand did the murder-lightning fly. [car.
 On his breast 'twixt the nipples it lighted, and hurled him to earth from his
 Then hasted Idaius to flee from the fair-wrought chariot afar ; 20
 For he dared not champion the dead, to bestride his brother slain,
 Else neither had he, even he, escaped from the blackness of bane ; [cloud,
 But Hephaestus from death redeemed him, and veiled him in darkness of
 Lest his priest should be broken-hearted, an old man misery-bowed.
 But the horses did Tydeus' son lead forth of the midst of the fray, 25
 And gave to his henchman to lead to the hollow galleys away.
 When the Trojans beheld how the sons of the priest were in evil plight,
 One fleeing from death, and one by his chariot slain outright,
 Sore shaken was each man's soul. But Athénê the flashing-eyed
 Grasped furious Arê's hand, and with eager words she cried : 30
 "Arês the manslayer, stormer of ramparts, murder-stained,
 Leave we the sons of Troy and Achaia unrestrained
 To fight, unto whomso Zeus Allfather shall grant renown ;
 But for us, let us hold us aloof, and beware Allfather's frown."

Then led she forth of the war-press Arês the fury-heart ; 35
 And she caused him to sit on the bank of the roaring Skamander apart.
 And the Danaans turned the Trojans to flight, and the war-chiefs then
 Slew each his man ; and first Agamemnon the king of men
 Hurled Odius the huge, Halizonia's lord, from his car to the dust ; [40
 For even as he turned him to flee, through his back was the king's spear thrust

'Twixt shoulder and shoulder, and onward and out through his breast it crashed.
Heavily fell he, his harness of battle clanged and clashed.

Then Idomeneus smote down Phaistus, Maeonian Borus' seed,
Who had hied him from Tarnē's furrows in Priam's quarrel to bleed ;
For he turned him to leap on his car, but Idomeneus spear-renowned 45
With a thrust of his lance long-shafted his rightward shoulder hath found.
From his chariot he fell, into horror of darkness swooning away ;
And Idomeneus' henchmen stripped the slain of his war-array.

Then Strophius' scion Skamandrius, cunning in craft of the chase,
Died by the spear of the prince Menelaus of Atreus' race. 50
Now the man was a mighty hunter, whom Artemis' self taught well
To smite with his shafts all beasts that in mountain-forests dwell.
Yet Artemis arrow-triumphant on that day nothing availed,
Nor the far-flying arrows of old, and the hands that never failed ;
But Atreus' son Menelaus the spear-renowned on his track 55
Followed fast as he fled from his face, and thrust with his lance at his back
'Twixt shoulder and shoulder, and onward and out through his breast it crashed ;
And he fell on his face, and his harness above him clanged and clashed.

Then Meriones dealt death to Phereklus, the son of the wright
Harmonides,—deft were his hands in marvellous mystery-might 60
Of curious work, for Athénē loved him passing well :
Yea, he fashioned for Paris the ships whence all those ills befell,
Which became unto all the Trojans a curse from overseas,
Yea, to himself, forasmuch as he knew not the Gods' decrees :—
Him Meriones overtook, from the shadowing death as he fled, 65

And down on his right haunch smote, and the spear-point onward sped
 Under the hip-bone passing, and cleaving the bladder beneath ; [death.
 And he dropped on his knees with a shriek, and was shrouded in darkness of

Now Meges hath smitten Pedaius, the child that a handmaid bare
 To Antenor ; yet was he heedfully nursed of Theano the fair ; 70
 For a kindness unto her lord, as her own did she hold him dear ;
 But Phyleus' scion the spear-renowned unto him drew near,
 And suddenly smote on the nape of his neck with his keen-whetted spear,
 And clear through the midst of the teeth and the root of the tongue did it pass ;
 And he fell in the dust, with his teeth hard-clenching the death-cold brass. 75

Then Eurypylus, son of Evaïmon, spilt Hypsênor's blood,
 Son of Dolopion the lordly, the priest of Skamander's flood.—
 And even as a god did the people revere that holy one ;—
 Even him hath Eurypylus found, Evaïmon's glorious son ;
 And fast as he fled from his face, followed faster ; his battlebrand flashed 80
 Down, as he leapt to the stroke, and the arm from the shoulder he slashed.
 Blood-streaming it fell ; and his eyes, as they swooned from gloom unto gloom,
 Saw the raven wings of Death, and the overmastering Doom.

So these in a grapple of giants the mighty labour wrought :
 But Tydeides—thou wouldst not have known him, for whom that hero fought,
 Whether for Troy or Achaia his war-wrath raged unquelled ; [85
 For he stormed o'er the plain like a river by floods of the wintertide swelled,
 When the rush of its waters hath burst through the dikes, and hath scattered
 When nothing their barriers avail as upriseth the river's pride, [them wide,
 When the fences of fruitful orchard-closes asunder are riven, 90

In the hour of its wild overflow, when the rains have descended from heaven,
 And before it in ruin and wreck fair labours of menfolk are driven :
 So in ruin and rout were the Trojan battalions from Tydeus' son
 Fleeing, for all that so many they were, and he but one.

But the glorious son of Lykaon beheld how he heaped the slain, 95
 How he hurled before him the ranks, as he stormed across the plain.
 Upon Tydeus' son, as he rushed on him, straightway his bow he drew,
 And on to the hero's strong right shoulder the keen shaft flew,
 At the corslet-plate, and the bitter arrow hath pierced it through,
 That behind it the point stood out, and the corslet was crimson-dyed. 100
 Then over him triumphed Lykaon's son, and afar he cried :

“ Up Trojans gallant of heart ! up, war-steed-goaders keen !
 For the chiefest Achaian is smitten : not long shall his strength, I ween,
 Outlast my mighty shaft, if in truth 'twas the guiding hand
 Of the Archer, the Zeus-begotten, that brought me from Lycia-land.” 105

So vaunting he cried, but the arrow had quelled not the hero's life.
 But aback to his chariot and horses he stepped, and a moment from strife
 He stayed him, and spake unto Sthenelus, there as he held them apart :

“ Haste thee, O Kapaneus' son, come down from the car, true heart,
 And so shalt thou draw from my shoulder the bitter-rankling dart.” 110

Leapt Sthenelus down from the chariot to earth, his bidding to do.
 And clean through the shoulder the length of the swift-winged shaft he drew ;
 And out through the pleated tunic the red blood sprang through the air.
 Thereat Diomedes the battle-helper cried in prayer :

“ Hear me, thou child of the Aegis-bearer, unwearied Power ! 115

If ever with kindly intent thou hast stood in the perilous hour
 Of the fight by my sire, unto me be now, O Athénê, near !
 Vouchsafe me to slay him,—yea, but to come within cast of spear,—
 Who hath shot me or ever I knew, and vaunteth in triumph-glee
 How that yet but a little while, and the sun no more shall I see.” 120

So prayed he, and Pallas Athénê heard that hero’s call ;
 And lightsome she made his limbs, his feet and his hands withal.
 And there at his side she stood, and she sped the winged word-flight :
 “ Be thou of good cheer, Diomedes, against yon foes to fight.
 For now with the aweless might of thy father thy breast have I filled, 125
 Of chariot-champion Tydeus, the wielder of the shield.
 And the mist that hath lain on thine eyes heretofore, I have purged it away,
 And so shalt thou clearly discern ’twixt God and man this day.
 And it shall be, that if there come hither a God to make proof of thy might,
 Against the Deathless Ones thou shalt not in any wise fight ; 130
 Save only if Aphroditê, the daughter of Zeus, shall pass
 Into battle, thou shalt not spare her, but smite with the keen-whetted brass.”

So Pallas Athénê spake, and behold, she was no more there :
 And into the forefront of battle again did Tydeides fare.
 Furious-fain was his spirit to fight with the Trojans before ; 135
 But there flamed up within him a war-wrath then that was three times more.
 As a lion he was that a shepherd, in guarding his sheep full-fleeced,
 Hath but grazed overleaping the fold, but hath quelled not the terrible beast.
 He hath roused but his strength, and thereafter no more for their help draweth
 But he fleeth aback to the steading, and leaveth them there in their fear. [near,

So he rendeth in frenzy of ravin ; in huddled heaps they fall,
 Till areek with the slaughter in fury he leapeth the high garth-wall.
 Even so Diomedes in fury plunged mid the Trojan array.
 Astynous there and Hypeiron, shepherd of folk, did he slay :
 Swift to the nipple of this one the javelin flashed from his hand ; 145
 That on the collar-bone hard by the neck by his mighty brand
 Was smitten, and clean from the back and the neck was the shoulder shred.
 Then he left them, and fast after Abas and young Polyidus he sped :
 Children of Eurydamas the dream-arreder they were :
 Yet he dreamed no dreams for them at their parting, that ancient seer, 150
 Nor had vision of strong Diomedes that came on his sons and slew.
 Then after Xanthus and Thoön, the children of Phainops, he flew,
 Striplings both, and their sire was with grief-stricken eld outworn.
 No son of his body beside to inherit his wealth was there born.
 There hath he slain them : from both the precious life hath he reft ; 155
 And sore lamentation and heart-stricken grief to their father are left ;
 For not from the war shall he welcome their home-coming feet any more,
 And the tearless eyes of kinsmen shall gloat on his hoarded store.

Two children of Priam Dardanus' son, by the hero slain,
 Echemmon and Chromius, fell ; for in one car rode they twain. 160
 And as leapeth a lion mid kine, and breaketh bone from bone
 In the neck of a heifer or cow in a forest-pasture lone,
 Even so these twain from the chariot by Tydeus' son overthrown
 Were hurled sore loth to the earth : their war-gear then did he strip ;
 And the horses he gave to his henchmen to drive to his hollow ship. 165

Then Aeneas beheld him cleaving the war-ranks havoc-wasted ;
 And he hied him forthright through the battle, through hurtling of lances he
 In quest of the godlike Pandarus searching the Trojans among. [hasted,
 And he found the son of Lykaon, the hero princely and strong.
 Then stood he before his face, and with eager breath 'gan say : 170

" Pandarus, where is thy bow ?—and thy winged shafts, where be they ?
 And thy glory, wherein there is none that may match him with thee in our land,
 Neither any in Lycia that dwelleth may vaunt him more cunning of hand ?
 Nay, lift up thine hands unto Zeus, and speed forth a shaft from thy bow
 At yonder triumphant destroyer who worketh us all this woe, 175
 Whosoever he be that hath laid full many a champion low ;—
 Unless it be haply a God that for sacrifice rendered not
 Is wroth with us : fearful it is when a God's wrath waxeth hot."

Unto him the glorious son of Lykaon answering spoke :
 " Aeneas, counsellor-chief of the mail-clad Trojan folk, 180
 Meseemeth the man is even as Tydeus' war-wise son ;
 For his buckler I know, and his helm, and the tossing crest thereon ;
 Yea, and the steeds I behold—yet I know not—a God it may be.
 But and if it be Tydeus' war-wise son, and none other than he,
 Not but with help of a God is he maddening thus, but anigh 185
 Goeth one of the Deathless, with shoulders in cloud-veil hid from mine eye,
 Who hath turned from his body aside mine arrow in act to light.
 For already my bow have I drawn, and I marked the winged shaft smite
 His rightward shoulder, and clean through the corslet-plate it sped.
 Yea, and I deemed I should hurl him to Hades to dwell with the dead : 190

Yet I quelled him not—'tis a God wrath-kindled in very deed.
 And behold, no horses have I, neither chariot in this my need :
 Yet I ween in the halls of Lykaon eleven fair chariots bide ;
 Fresh-fashioned they be, new-garnished, and hung from side to side
 With awning-cloths, and by each of them standeth a yoke of twain
 Idly champing the spelt and the barley's hoary grain. 195

Ah, many a time and oft did Lykaon the spearman grey
 Charge me, or ever I fared from our stately palace away,
 Yea, bade that by thundering steeds high-borne on the battle-car
 I should lead in the roar of onset the ranks of Ilium's war. 200

But I would not hearken nor heed,—sure this had been more for my good,—
 Being careful for those my steeds, lest haply the stintless food
 That never they lacked should fail where the thronging thousands meet.
 So I needs must leave them, and fare unto Ilium's burg on my feet,
 Putting my trust in my bow and the shafts that should profit me not. 205

For at chieftains twain this day hath mine arrow already been shot,
 Even Tydeus' and Atreus' sons, and from both sprang very blood
 As my shaft smote home, yet I roused but the more their battle-mood.
 Wherefore in evil hour did I take the curved bow down
 From the peg, in the day when I came unto lovely Ilium-town, 210

Showing kindness to Hector the godlike, with them that followed me.
 But if ever again I return, if again with mine eyes I shall see
 My fatherland-home and my wife, and my palace's stately height,
 Then let an outland foe smite off mine head forthright,
 If I spare to take this bow in mine hands, and to knap it in twain, 215

And to cast on the blazing fire, for as idle wind is it vain."

Answered Aeneas, the Captain of Troy's array, and he said :
 " Nay, talk not thus : howbeit the mischief shall nowise be stayed
 Till thou and I have made trial with chariot and battle-steed,
 Till with yonder destroyer we match our might in warrior's weed. 220
 Go to, get thee up to my chariot, and so shalt thou give good heed
 To the horses of Tros, how featly over the plain they speed
 Hither and thither triumphant in chase and unperilled in flight.
 Safe back to the city withal shall they bring us, if victory-might
 Unto Tydeus' son Diomedes by Zeus shall be granted again. 225
 Come now, take thou in thine hands the lash and the shining rein,
 And I in the chariot to fight yon foeman will take my stand.
 Or thou, wilt thou bide his onset, committing the steeds to mine hand ?"

Unto him made answer again Lykaon's glorious son :
 " Aeneas, the reins take thou, and the horses, for these be thine own. 230
 Better, I ween, will they speed for the charioteer that they know
 The curvèd car, if so be we must flee from the face of the foe ;
 Lest haply in sudden affright mad-plunging thy voice they lack,
 And fail us at need, from the battle refusing to bear us aback,
 And the scion of Tydeus the great-heart should leap on us there, and slay, 235
 And should drive the thunder-footed steeds to the galleys away.
 Nay, but the chariot and steeds let the hand of the master guide,
 And I with the keen-whetted spear yon champion's coming will bide."

So spake they, and into the chariot cunningly-carven they stepped,
 And swiftly against Tydeides in fury of onset they swept. 240

Then Kapaneus' glorious scion beholdeth them drawing anigh,
And he speedeth the winged word-flight, and to Tydeus' son doth he cry :

“ O Tydeus' son Diomedes, beloved of my soul, I see
Two strong men fain of the battle that bear down fast upon thee.
Measureless prowess is theirs, full deft with the bow is the one,
Pandarus, yea and he nameth him lord Lykaon's son. 245
And Aeneas nameth his father Anchises, a prince of the earth,
And Aphroditē the Goddess was she that gave him birth.
Go to, let us flee on the car : storm not in the forefront of strife
So daring-reckless of odds, lest haply thou lose thy life.” 250

Spake Diomedes the strong with sternly-lowering brow :
“ Talk not of fleeing to me : thou shalt not persuade me, I trow.
For it is not my father's son that will fight as the skulkers fight,
Neither blench from the onset, while yet unbroken abideth my might.

The chariot—I scorn to ascend it, but even as I stand here,
So will I meet them : Pallas Athēnē forbids me to fear. 255

Yea, and the fleetfoot horses shall not bear back these twain,
To deliver them out of our hands, though one escape from bane.

This thing will I tell thee moreover, and deep in thine heart let it bide :
If Athēnē the counsel-bounteous shall grant to me victory-pride,
That I smite these twain unto death, my fleetfoot steeds shalt thou stay
Here, fastening back the reins to the chariot-rail straightway.

And remember thou that thou spring on the steeds of Aeneas then,
And drive them forth of the Trojans amidst of Achaia's men.
For these be of that same race of the which Zeus Thunder-lord 260

Gave unto Tros in requital for Ganymede unrestored,
 Of all steeds even from dawn unto sunset the noblest blood.
 But Anchises the king of men stole seed of the god-given brood ;
 For he privily brought of his mares unto King Laomedon's stud,
 Whereof, as it fell, came six that were foaled unto him in his halls. 270
 Four is he keeping yet, and he nurtureth them in his stalls :
 And Aeneas the panic-waster, his son, received of him twain.
 Now if we might win for us these, high glory thereof should we gain."

So there of the deed and the hope of renown communed they two :
 And louder the horse-hoofs thundered, as nearer the foemen drew. 275
 Then first the glorious son of Lykaon shouted aloud :

" O stout-heart, battle-crafty, thou scion of Tydeus the proud,
 Not by the bitter-keen shaft wast thou quelled, when it sped from my bow :
 But my javelin now will I prove, if perchance I may lay thee low."

So cried he, and swung up on high the lance long-shafted, and cast ; 280
 And it smote on the shield of Tydeides, and on through the buckler passed
 The flight of the brazen head, and it came to the corslet anigh.

Then loudly the son of Lykaon shouted the triumph-cry : | trow

" Thou art smitten !—art stabbed through the belly of thee !—short time, I
 Shall thy strength outlast it, and high renown hast thou given me now !" 285

Spake Diomedes the stalwart, and undismayed cried he :
 " Thou hast missed me and smitten me not ; and I ween ye shall not go free,
 Ye twain, till that one of you falling shall glut with the life blood of him
 Arêts the stubborn-shielded, the warrior murder-grim."

So spake he, and hurled, and Athénê guided the javelin on 290

To the nose by the eye : through the ivory-gleaming teeth hath it gone ;
 And the brass unwearied severed the tongue of the man at the root,
 And forth to the light from beneath his chin did the point of it shoot.
 From the chariot he fell, and above him his war-gear flashing rang,
 All wavering sheen, and aside the fleet steeds startled sprang. [death-pang.
 And the soul shuddered forth, and the strength of him swooned in the fierce
 Down leapt Aeneas with buckler and spear sudden-clutched for the fray,
 Adread lest the sons of Achaia should hale that corpse away.
 And there he bestrode the dead as a lion in pride of his might,
 Outstretching before him his spear and his buckler's orb of light, 300
 Fierce-eager to kill whosoever should come to take that prey.
 And he shouted his terrible cry : but a stone in his path that lay
 Hath Tydeides seized,—such a mass as not two men might bear,
 Such men as be now on the earth, yet lightly he swung it in air ;—
 On the hip of Aeneas he dashed it, there where the thigh-bone ball 305
 Turneth about in the hip, which men the cup-bone call.
 So the cup-bone it crushed, and it snapped the tendons twain withal ;
 And the rough rock flayed the skin. On his knees did the hero fall ;
 And he stayed him, propping his weight with his brawny hand on the ground ;
 And a mist and a blackness of night fell shrouding his eyes around. 310
 And there of a surety Aeneas the king of men had died,
 But the daughter of Zeus, Aphroditê, his peril swiftly espied,—
 Even she to Anchises that bare him in days when he tended the kine,
 And around her beloved son her snow-white arms did she twine ;
 And before him a fold of her mantle glistering-bright she cast 315

For a fence from the darts, lest a foeman with fleet steeds following fast,
Hurling his lance at his breast should take his life away.

So went she bearing her dear-loved son from the midst of the fray.

Then Sthenelus, Kapaneus' son, remembered with diligent heed
The behest of the lord Diomedes, the battle-helper's rede. 320

So his own steeds thunder-footed aloof from the din did he stay,
Fastening back the reins to the chariot-rail straightway.

On the car-steeds beautiful-maned of Aeneas leapt he then,
And forth of the Trojans he drove them amidst of Achaia's men.

To Deïpylus' hand did he give them, the comrade he loved the best [325]

Of the friends of his youth, for that even as his own were the thoughts of his
To drive to the ships: but again to his own war-chariot's floor [breast,

He sprang, and the shining reins he grasped in his hand once more.

Then with the strong-hoofed horses he hastened battle-keen

Where Tydeides with pitiless spear followed after the Cyprian Queen. 330

For he knew her a weakling Goddess, and not as the Dread Ones are

That sway the victory-balance when heroes be met for war,—

Not as Athénê she, nor Enyo the city-waster ! [her.

So he came on the fleer at last, through the throngs of the strife as he chased

Then the scion of great-heart Tydeus suddenly leapt, and upraised 335

His keen-whetted spear, and the skin of her tender hand he grazed.

For the lance-point rent the ambrosial veil that around her clung,

The robe that the Graces wove, and the flesh of her palm it stung

By the wrist, and therefrom the heavenly blood of the Goddess flowed,

The ichor that runs in the veins of them of the Blessed Abode : 340

For they taste not of bread, neither drink they of wine with its face of flame :
For this cause bloodless are they, and the Deathless Ones their name.

She hath dropped her son from her arms, at the sharp pang shrieking aloud ;
But the hands of Apollo have caught him away in darkness of cloud
Enshrouded, lest haply a foeman with fleet steeds following fast 345
Should thrust out the life from his breast with a deadly javelin-cast.
Loud after her rang Diomedes the battle-helper's shout :

“ Begone, thou daughter of Zeus, from the war and the battle-rout !
Doth this not suffice thee, to cozen with guile light women and frail ?
But and if thou wilt mingle in battle, I trow thine heart shall quail 350
With affright, yea even to hear, as thou sittest afar, the tale !”

So spake he, but she in a frenzy of grievous torment fled ;
And her from the midst of the war-press Iris the Wind-foot led
Racked with the pain of her hurt, with the fair flesh darkening round.
And Arès the wild-heart sitting to left of the battle she found. 355
His lance on a cloud was leaned, and his fleet steeds stood thereby.
And she fell on her knees, and besought her brother with earnest cry
For his golden-frontleted horses, the trampers of the sky :

“ O brother belovèd, vouchsafe thy steeds !—O grant my prayer,
That so to Olympus, the home of the Deathless Ones, I may fare. 360
Tormented I am by a wound which was dealt by the deathling hand
Of Tydeides—in strife against Zeus Allfather this day would he stand ?”

Now the golden-frontleted steeds to her prayer hath Arès given :
She hath mounted the chariot, her heart the while with anguish riven ;
And beside her hath Iris mounted : the reins through her fingers she drew; 365

And she lashed the coursers fleet, and with right good will they flew.
 So they came to the steeps of Olympus, the Gods' high palace-hall ;
 And there swift Iris the Wind-foot unyoked and stabled in stall
 The horses, and cast them ambrosia for food, for immortals were these.
 But low Aphroditê the Goddess fell on Diônê's knees. 370
 And her did the soft-enfolding arms of her mother take ;
 And she soothed her with loving caress, and she uttered the word and spake :
 " Now which of the Heaven-folk, darling, this unto thee hath done
 Roughly and rudely, as though thou hadst sinned in the sight of the sun ?"
 Then Aphroditê the laughter-winsome her sorrow told : 375
 " He hath stabbed me—Tydeus' son Diomedes the overbold,
 Because I essayed to rescue my dear-loved son from the war,
 Aeneas, for dearest of men is he unto me by far.
 Not betwixt Troy and Achaia now is the shout of the fray,
 But now are the Danaans warring with them that abide for aye." 380
 And to her made answer Diônê the Goddess divine again :
 " Nay, darling, endure it, and bear for a little thy bitter pain.
 For many in heaven that abide have been evil entreated so
 Of men, when God in his spite against God would work him woe.
 So was it with Arês, when Otus and Ephialtes the strong, 385
 The sons of Alôeus, held him a captive prisoned long.
 For thirteen months in a brazen cell was he fettered fast ;
 Yea, Arês the battle-insatiate had perished there at the last,
 But the bride of the giants' father, Eeriboia the fair,
 Told it to Hermes, who stole him out of their murder-lair, 390

When now he was pining to death by the strain of the gyves outworn.
 So was it with Hérê ; the stalwart child to Amphitryon born
 Suddenly shot with a shaft three-barbed at her rightward breast,
 And smote her with torment of pitiless pangs that knew no rest.
 Yea, Hades the terrible tasted the shaft swift-sped from the cord 395
 In the hour when the selfsame man, the seed of the Aegis-lord,
 In Hell-gate amidst of the dead gave him over to torment a prey.
 Then he fled to the palace of Zeus and Olympus far away,
 Anguished in soul, thrilled through with his pangs, for the rankling dart
 Stood deep in his mighty shoulder, and bitterness filled his heart. 400
 But pain-quelling salves on the wound Paiaion spread, whereby
 He restored him, for not as the deathlings he was, that be born but to die.
 Ah desperate !—reckless worker of lawless deeds and fell,
 Who vexed with his arrows the Gods in the halls of Olympus that dwell !
 But on thee this man hath been set by Athénê the grey-eyed Queen : 405
 Ah fool !—for the son of Tydeus knoweth not this, I ween,
 That whoso shall fight with the Deathless, not long be his days on the earth.
 No children shall prattle about his knees in their winsome mirth
 When he cometh aback from the strife and the terrible battle-throng.
 Therefore let Tydeus' son, yea, though he be never so strong, 410
 Take heed lest a mightier than thou in the battle against him rise,
 Lest Aigialeia, the child of Adrêstus, the passing-wise,
 Shall start from her haunted slumbers, and waken her maids with her cries,
 For her lord and her love, for the pride of Achaia, wailing in grief,—
 That stately wife of the prince Diomedes, the horse-quelling chief.” 415

She spake, and she wiped the ichor away with her cool soft palms :
 Soothed was the hand, and the pangs were assuaged, as with comforting balms.
 But Athénê and Lady Hérê with hard eyes looked thereon,
 And with heart-stinging gibes they wrought to provoke Zeus, Kronos' son.
 And Athénê the flashing-eyed in the midst of the Deathless spake : 420
 " Allfather, for whatso I say wilt thou bid thine anger awake ?
 The Lady of Cyprus would tempt some bride of Achaia to flee
 With a man of the Trojans, the folk that she loveth wondrously.
 So it fell, as she fondled a fair-robed dame of Achaia-land,
 That the pin of the golden brooch hath scratched her dainty hand." 425
 So did she speak, but the Father of Gods and menfolk smiled ;
 And he called Aphroditê, and spake to his golden-glorious child :
 " Darling, what hast thou to do with the rage of the battle-fire ?
 Follow after the kindlings of love, and the crown of the heart's desire ;
 And in strife shall Athénê delight her, and Arês shall glut his ire." 430
 So there in the halls of Olympus in sorrow and scorn spake they.
 But still on Aeneas sprang Diomedes the battle-stay,
 Though he knew that the arms of Apollo about him were cast for a shield ;
 Yet he stood not in awe of the God and his might, but, desperate-willed,
 Ever pressed on Aeneas to kill him, and spoil his war-array. 435
 Thrice did he leap to the onslaught, furious-fain to slay,
 And thrice 'neath Apollo's buffet his glittering buckler rang.
 But when for the fourth time on like an angry God he sprang,
 Then with a terrible voice Far-darter Apollo cried : [pride 440
 " Think, offspring of Tydeus, and shrink, neither dare in the thoughts of thy

To match thee with Gods : deem not there is any comparison found [ground.]
Twixt the race of the Deathless, and men that must tread on the face of the

Then backward Tydeides shrank, and forbore for a little the fight,
In dread of the wrath of Apollo, the Lord of the arrows of light.

And aloof from the war-press Apollo hath laid Aeneas down

445

In the place where standeth his temple in holy Pergamus-town.

And of Lēto and Artemis arrow-triumphant in that great shrine

Was he healed of his hurt and anointed with chrism of glory divine.

But a wraith by Apollo the King of the Silver Bow was made

In semblance such as Aeneas, and like him harness-arrayed :

450

And around that phantom form did the grapple of conflict close

With Trojans and mighty Achaians stabbing and hailing blows

On the bucklers and tasselled targets that shielded the hearts of their foes.

Then unto Arēs the wild-heart Phoebus Apollo cried :

“ Arēs the manslayer, stormer of ramparts, murder-dyed,

455

Wilt thou not enter the battle and pluck yon man from the fray,

Tydeides?—sure he would fight against Zeus Allfather to-day ;

For the Cyprian Queen in the hand at the wrist hath he wounded first,

Thereafter on me, even me, like a God in his anger he burst.”

So spake he, and sat him down upon Pergamus' topmost height.

460

But Arēs the Slayer to kindle the Trojans plunged mid the fight

In the likeness of Akamas, fleetfoot lord of the Thracian folk ;

And to hearten the sons of Priam with masterful hest he spoke :

“ Ho children of Priam the great king fostered of Zeus, how long

Will ye suffer your folk to be slain of Achaia's battle-throng ?

465

Shall it be till your strong-built gates shall ring with their onset-cheer ?
 Low lieth the man that we honoured even as Hector's peer,
 Even Aeneas the son of Anchises the mighty-souled.
 Let us save from the trampling and tumult our comrade stout and bold."

So cheered he the folk, till the hearts of them all with the war-flame glowed :
 And straightway with Hector the godlike Sarpedon bitterly chode :
 " Hector, and where is thy prowess, the might that was thine of yore ?
 Thou saidst, time was, that unhelped by an outland host of war,
 With thy brethren and marriage-kin thou wouldest hold this city alone.
 Where are they ?—I see them not—mine eyes may discern of them none. 475
 But as dogs that encompass a lion, so backward skulk they afraid.
 It is we that be fighting, we, thine outland battle-aid !
 See, I am thy battle-helper ; I journeyed a weary way
 From a far land, even from Lycia, where Xanthus' eddies play.
 There left I a dear-loved wife, and the babe in her arms that she bore, 480
 And goodly possessions, which many a lackland coveteth sore.
 Yet I reck not, but kindle the Lycians to battle, and pant for the fray
 With a champion, albeit no substance of mine lieth here for a prey,
 No spoil as of cattle or treasure for foemen to bear away.
 But thou, thou art idly standing, with never a word of cheer 485
 That thy people may bide the strife for the sake of their dear ones here !
 Take heed lest the toils of a net that none shall escape may close
 Around you, and ye be delivered a spoil and a prey to your foes.
 Ay, soon will they utterly waste your city builded fair !
 What, man, thine heart should be heavy by night and by day with its care !

Thou shouldst plead with the chiefs of the host that have come from afar for thy sake
To quit them like men,—so haply the shame from thy name shouldst thou take!"

So spake he, and Hector's soul by the word of his chiding was stung :
Forthright from his chariot to earth in his harness of war hath he sprung :
And brandishing lances keen he ranged the host about, 495
Cheering them on to the fight, and he wakened the onset-shout.
So they rallied, and front to front with the foemen their battle was stayed :
And the Argives closed their ranks, and awaited them undismayed.

And as when by a wind the chaff through a threshing-floor is borne,
When the winnowing-fans are waving, and She of the Golden Corn 500
Parteth the grain from the chaff by the wind-blast lightly tossed,
And the chaff-heaps whiten and whiten ; so the Danaan host
From head to heel grew white with the dust that, raised on high
By the feet of the steeds, rolled up to the brazen vault of the sky,
As the charioteers wheeled round, and the cars plunged back mid the fight. 505
On came the tempest of buffeting hands, and in darkness of night,
For a veil to the onset of Troy, did Arès enshroud the fray,
Hitherward ranging and thither : so toiled he the hest to obey
Of Apollo Golden-sword, who had bidden him kindle the heart
Of Troy to the fight, so soon as he marked Athénê depart 510
From the strife, for that she was the stay of the Danaan battle-line.
Then sent Apollo Aeneas forth of his wealth-heaped shrine ;
And the breast of the shepherd of hosts with dauntless courage he filled :
And lo, mid his comrades Aeneas was standing : their hearts were thrilled
With joy to behold him alive in their midst, and mighty of limb, 515

And gallant of spirit : howbeit was none that questioned him ;
 For the war-toil suffered them not which Silverbow had waked,
 And earth-curse Arês, and Strife of the murder-thirst unslaked.

The Aiantes the while, and Odysseus, and strong Diomedes withal,
 Were cheering the Danaans on : there was naught could their souls appal, 520
 Nor the fury nor whirlwind rush of the Trojans charging on :
 But steadfast they stood as a rampart of clouds that Kronos' son
 In a windless calm hath builded along the mountain steeps,
 Utterly moveless, so long as the might of the North-wind sleeps,
 And the rage of the wild storm-breathers, which scatter in disarray 525
 The shadowing clouds that flee from their shrieking blasts away :
 So steadfast the Danaans bided the Trojans, and dreamed not of fear.
 And Atreides ranged through the press with many a word of cheer :

“ Friends, quit you like heroes, and take to you hearts unblenching-bold !
 In the grim death-grapple bethink you how many your deeds behold. 530
 For of such as bethink them so more live than be slain in the strife ;
 But the fleer is fameless : yea, and he shall not deliver his life.”

Then smote he a man in the forefront of fight with his lance swift-darted,
 Dêicoön ; comrade he was of Aeneas the mighty-hearted,
 Pergasus' son, whom they honoured even as Priam's seed, 535
 For that foremost he was in the onset, in battle good at need.
 But Lord Agamemnon's spear to the champion's buckler flew :
 Nothing availed him the shield, for the brazen head burst through
 And on through the baldric, and into the nether belly it flashed ;
 Heavily fell he, and o'er him his armour clanged and clashed. 540

Thereafter Aeneas slew of the Danaan mighty ones
 Orsilochus, Krêthon withal, Diokles' hero-sons.
 Their father in Phêrê, the beautiful-buildest city, abode,
 And his substance was great, and by lineage he sprang from a River-god,
 Even Alpheius, whose broad stream floweth o'er Pylian sand, 545
 Who begat Orsilochus, lord of a many-peopled land.
 From Orsilochus sprang there a son great-hearted, Diokles hight ;
 And there sprang from the lord Diokles twin sons, men of might,
 Orsilochus, Krêthon withal, full cunning in battle-lore.
 And these, when they came unto manhood, sailed to the Ilian shore : 550
 To the war-steed-land with the Argives in black-hulled ships did they speed,
 To avenge Agamemnon and Lord Menelaus, Atreus' seed.
 And there did death end all, and o'ershroud them in endless night.
 They were like unto lions twain that be reared on the mountain-height
 By their mother amidst of the brakes of a forest dark and deep ; 555
 And they snatch from the byre the ox, from the fold the fatling sheep,
 And they harry the homesteads of menfolk, until it shall come to pass
 That they too perish by hands of men on the keen-whetted brass.
 Even so overborne by the hands of Aeneas did these twain fall ;
 Yet stately they fell as the kings of the forest, the pine-trees tall. 560
 Sore pitied them Arê's-beloved Menelaus in death as they lay,
 And he rushed through the forefront of fight in his flashing war-array,
 Shaking his lance ; and the flame of his fury Arê fanned,
 With intent that the hero should die by Aeneas' mightier hand.
 But Antilochus, scion of Nestor the great-heart, beheld his plight, 565

And he strode through the forefront, for sorely he feared lest mischief should
On the shepherd of hosts, and their toil should be suddenly nothing worth. [light
And even as they twain stood with the keen-whetted spears stretched forth
In their strong hands, face to face, aglow with the battle-mood,
Lo, by the side of the shepherd of hosts Antilochus stood. 570

But Aeneas, though never so keen a warrior, might not bide
When standing against him he saw two champions side by side.
So forth of the press they haled to the host of Achaia the slain,
And into the hands of their comrades gave those hapless twain ;
Then they turned them about, and they plunged mid the forefront of battle again.
Then laid they Pylaimenes, peer of the War-god, dead on the field,
Chief of the Paphlagonians, the great-heart men of the shield ;
For there came on him Atreus' son Menelaus the spear-renowned,
And the lance-head, there as he stood, his life through the collar-bone found.
Then Antilochus smote down Mydon, his henchman and charioteer, 580
Stout son of Atymnius,—back was he turning his steeds in his fear—
With a stone in the midst of his elbow he smote : from his hands hath he hurled
The ivory-studded reins, and adown in the dust are they whirled.
Then Antilochus leapt on him : into his temple his falchion he thrust :
Gasping he reeled from his fair-fashioned car, and was dashed to the dust. 585
Headlong in suchwise he fell as on shoulders and head to stand ;
There for a space was he stayed, for exceeding deep was the sand,
Till spurned by the hoofs of his horses outstretched in the dust he lay :
And Antilochus lashed them, and drove to the host of Achaia away.

Then Hector across the battle espied them, and thitherward leapt 590

Shouting his war-cry : behind him the strong battalions swept
 Of the Trojans, while Arê's and mighty Enyo strode before.
 The ruthless tumult of battle the grim War-goddess bore ;
 And Arê tossed in his hands a giant-shafted spear ;
 Now stormed he to vanward of Hector, and now swept forward the rear. 595
 Then shuddered the battle-stay Diomedes in awe-struck dread.
 And even as a shiftless man that is crossing a plain wide-spread
 Is stayed by a swift-rushing river in flood, as seaward it sweepeth
 Roaring with foam, and aback from the outrush of waters he leapeth ;
 Even so shrank backward Tydeides, and loud to his men cried he : 600

“O friends, no marvel we wonder that Hector the godlike should be
 A warrior spear-triumphant, a valiant man of war ;
 For beside him there standeth a God ever keeping destruction afar.
 Lo there by his side goeth Arê in shape of a mortal wight !
 But with faces turned evermore to the Trojans, and not as in flight, 605
 Give back, lest perchance we be found with the very Gods to fight.”

So cried he, and nearer the Trojans, and ever nearer, drew.
 Then warriors twain heart-full of the war-glee Hector slew,
 Menesthles and Anchialus, in the selfsame chariot borne.
 And great Telamonian Aias had ruth of them lying forlorn ; 610
 And he hurled with his glittering javelin, as up to the foe he strode,
 And Amphius Selagus' scion he smote, who in Paisus abode,
 Wealthy in substance and tilth-land : yet was he drawn by his doom
 Unto Priam and Priam's sons with his battle-aid to come.
 Sped to his baldric the swift-rushing javelin of Telamon's son, 615

And into his nether belly the lance long-shafted hath gone ;
 And he fell with a crash. Then Aias to spoil his battle-gear
 Rushed on : howbeit the Troyfolk rained down spear on spear ;
 And aslant from his shield did many a keen point gleaming glance.
 But he setteth his heel on the dead, and he draweth the brazen lance 620
 From the flesh : yet he might not strip from the shoulders of him that he slew
 The goodly mail ; for the darts overwhelmed him, so thickly they flew.
 Yea, he shrank from the ring of defenders, the Trojans haughty-souled,
 For they pressed on him spear in hand, those champions many and bold ;
 And tall though he was and stalwart, and haughty-loth to yield, 625
 Yet backward they bore him, and weight-overmastered the giant reeled.
 So there in the desperate toil of the grim death-grapple they strove.
 And against Sarpedon the godlike the doom overmastering drove
 Tlepolemus, Héraklēs' scion, a hero tall and strong.
 So anigh to each other they came, stepping forth from the battle-throng, 630
 The son and the son's son they of Zeus the Cloudrack-lord ;
 Then spake Tlepolemus first, and he cried the challenging word :
 " O Counsellor-chief of the Lycians, what hast thou to do to cower
 From the fray like a battle-witless wight in the perilous hour ?
 Men call thee the child of the Aegis-bearer—they lie therein ! 635
 Not a little thou lackest, I ween, of the prowess of that heaven-kin
 Which sprang from the loins of Zeus in the days of the men of old.
 Not as of thee is the tale of the might of Héraklēs told,
 Even my father, the steadfast-hearted, the lion-souled,
 Who came for Laomedon's horses of yore to the Troyland coast. 640

But six were his ships, and exceeding few were the men of his host ;
 Yet he wasted Ilium-town, till her streets all desolate lay.
 But thou—thy spirit is craven, and minisheth still thine array.
 Ha, not for a bulwark of battle to Troy hast thou fared, I trow,
 From Lycia-land, though never so stalwart thine outward show ! 645
 Thou shalt pass through the gates of the grave by me, even me, laid low.”

Made answer to him Sarpedon, the Lycian champion grim :
 “ Tlepolemus, verily Ilium the holy was smitten of him
 Because of Laomedon’s folly, the pride-uplifted king,
 Who requited his toil and his kindness with cursing and threatening, 650
 Neither paid him the mares for the which he had come from a far-away land.
 But for thee—I tell thee that slaughter and black death dealt by my hand
 Shall be wreaked on thee here, and thou by my javelin dashed to the ground
 Shalt give glory to me, and thy soul unto Hades the steed-renowned.”

He spake, and Tlepolemus lifted his ashen spear on high, 655
 And from each man’s hand did his shaft at the selfsame moment fly.
 And the lance of Sarpedon smote on the midst of the neck of his foe,
 And onward and out beyond did the bitter spear-head go :
 And over the eyes of Tlepolemus blackness of darkness swept.
 But into the thigh of Sarpedon his lance long-shafted leapt. 660
 Onward the furious point of it rushed through the quivering limb,
 Grazing the bone, but his sire still warded destruction from him.
 Then from the midst of the battle his hero-comrades bore
 Sarpedon the godlike, the while the long spear burdened him sore
 As it trailed ; yet no man marked it, and none took thought for his plight, 665

To draw from his thigh the spear, to the end he might stand upright,
 Mid their haste—such labour they had for his help mid the tangle of fight.
 Out of the battle the while did the mailed Achaians bring
 Tlepolemus slain, and Odysseus beheld that evil thing,
 Odysseus the steadfast-hearted, and stirred was his spirit with pain ; 670
 And the thoughts and intents of his mind for a space were divided in twain,
 Whether first to pursue that sore-hurt son of the Thunder-lord,
 Or to fall on the Lycians left, and to smite with the edge of the sword.
 But not for Odysseus the mighty-souled did the Fates ordain
 That the princely scion of Zeus should be by his keen brass slain : 675
 Therefore Athénê turned his wrath on the Lycian array.
 Alastor, and Koiranus, Chromius there did the hero slay ;
 Alkander and Halius withal, and Noémon and Prytanis died :—
 Yea, godlike Odysseus had slain full many a Lycian beside,
 But Hector Lightning-helm's keen glance that havoc espied. 680
 Through the forefront of battle in harness of flame-bright brass did he stride,
 Bringing fear on the Danaans : then was the child of Zeus full fain
 Of his coming, and faintly gasped Sarpedon amidst of his pain :
 “ Forsake me not, offspring of Priam, to lie the Danaans' prey !
 But save me : content were I that my life should pass away, 685
 So it be but within your city :—I know that mine eyes shall see
 Never again mine home, nor the land that fostered me,
 Nor the welcoming smile of my wife, nor my babe in its wordless glee.”
 So spake he, but Hector the splendour-helmeted answered him not ;
 But he rushed on past to the fight, for his heart was vengeance-hot 690

To be hurling the Argives back, and to heap their carcases there.
 Then did his hero-companions Sarpedon the godlike bear
 From the fight unto Zeus the Aegis-wielder's oak-tree green.
 Then forth of his wounded thigh the ashen javelin keen
 Did goodly Pelagon thrust, the friend right dear unto him. 695
 Then fainted his spirit ; his failing eyes with a mist grew dim.
 Howbeit again he revived when the North-wind's cool fresh breath
 Fanned him, and quickened his soul as it swooned at the gates of death.
 Now the Argives, when Arêš and Hector the brass-mailed charged their array,
 Turned not their faces to flee to the black-hulled galleys away ; 700
 Neither rushed they forward to battle, but backward still gave ground
 So soon as they knew that the War-god amidst of the Trojans was found.
 Who then was the first, and who was the last in the red dust laid
 By Hector the child of Priam, and Arêš the brass-arrayed ?
 Teuthras the godlike, Orestes the war-steed-smiter withal 705
 And Trêchus Aetolia's spearman, and there Oinomaus fall,
 And Helenus Oinopus' son, and Oresbius taslet-gleaming,
 Who in Hylê abode, with his heart of his wealth's increase aye dreaming,
 Of his cornfields aslope to the mere of Kephisus, and round them there
 The farms of the folk of Boeotia, the fruitful land and fair. 710
 Now when Hêrê the ivory-wristed Goddess beheld these two,
 How in the wild death-grapple the Argive men they slew,
 Straightway she turned to Athênê, and sped the winged word-flight :
 “ Out on it, child of the Aegis-wielder, unwearied Might !
 Good sooth, unto Lord Menelaus our promise was spoken in vain 715

That Ilium should perish or ever he gat him home again,
 If we suffer that Arês the baleful shall thus rage unrestrained !
 Up, let our prowess awaken, the storm of our wrath be unreined !"

She spake, and the Goddess Athênê the grey-eyed hearkened her rede.
 And to harness her golden-frontleted horses hied her with speed 720
 Hêrê the Goddess, the Queen, great Kronos' glorious seed.
 Swift on the brazen wheels laid Hêbê the chariot-seat ;
 Twice four be the brazen spokes on the axle of steel that meet ;
 And the felloe that claspeth the same, it is wrought of unperishing gold ;
 And of brass be the tires close-lapping,—a marvel they are to behold ;— 725
 And of silver the naves thereof swift-whirling on either hand ;
 And the seat of the car with many a gold and silver band
 Is plaited ; and two be the chariot-rails that encompass it round.
 And the pole is of silver withal : on the end thereof she bound
 The golden yoke, and with golden traces she hung it about, 730
 Most fair : and forth to the yoke were the fleetfoot steeds led out
 Of Hêrê furious-fain of the strife and the onset-shout.

But Athênê the child of the Aegis-wielder, the Lord of Thunder,
 Cast down on her father's threshold her mantle's woven wonder,
 The rainbow-broidered robe of her own hands' fashioning ; 735
 And she did on her body the tunic of Zeus the Cloudrack-king,
 And in harness of tear-drenched battle her mighty limbs arrayed.
 Over her shoulders the terrible tasselled aegis she laid ;
 Around it in serpent-coilings enwreathed is Terror rolled,
 Strife, Valour, the onset-yell that maketh the blood run cold 740

Are therein, and the Gorgon-head, the unspeakable monstrous thing,
 The ghastly, the fearful marvel of Zeus the Aegis-king.
 And the helmet twofold-crested of fourfold plate did she don,
 Of gold, with the hosts of a hundred cities emblazoned thereon.
 And grasping her spear she hath stepped on the chariot that flameth as fire,—
 With her huge spear, massy and strong ; for the Child of a Mighty Sire
 Quelleth therewith whole ranks of the heroes that kindle her ire.
 Swiftly hath Hêrê uplifted the scourge, and the steeds doth she lash.
 Self-moving the gates of Heaven spring wide with a thunder-crash,
 Whose warders the Hours be, to whom is the charge of Olympus given, 750
 To open or shut the rift in the cloud-built rampart of Heaven.
 On through the portals the steeds fair-heeding the goad have they driven.
 And they came on the son of Kronos sitting apart from the rest
 Of the Gods, upon myriad-ridged Olympus' topmost crest.
 Then Hêrê the ivory-wristed Goddess her horses stayed, 755
 And she questioned of Zeus most high, the offspring of Kronos, and said :
 “ Allfather, art thou not indignant for Arês’ deeds of bane,
 How great and how goodly a host of Achaians his fury hath slain
 Recklessly, lawlessly ? Anguish is mine !—but careless the while
 Apollo Silverbow and the Cyprian triumphantly smile. 760
 They have hounded a mad fiend on who knoweth nor justice nor right.
 Allfather, wilt thou be enkindled to wrath against me, if I smite,
 If I chase this Arês afar from the battle in pitiful plight ? ”
 And Zeus the Cloudrack-sweeper made answer to Hêrê again :
 “ Haste thee—uprouse thou against him Athênê the War-fiend’s bane, 765

The Prey-giver, mightiest in making him taste of bitterest pain."

So spake he, and Hérê the white-armed Goddess gave heed thereto ;
 And she touched the steeds with the lash, and with eager speed they flew
 In the midst between earth and the stars on the pavement of heaven that burn.
 And far as a man with his eyes through the sea-line-haze may discern, 770
 On a cliff as he sitteth and gazeth away o'er the wine-dark deep,
 So far at a bound do the loud-neighing steeds of the Deathless leap.
 So they came to the land of Troy and her rivers that seaward run,
 To the place where Skamander and Simoïs blend their streams in one.
 There stayed she the horses, Hérê the Queen of the ivory wrist ; 775
 From the car she unyoked them, and round them she hung deep folds of mist :
 And lo, for their meat with ambrosia did Simoïs' banks blush bright.
 Then the Goddesses hied them, as doves soft-gliding in soundless flight,
 To the help of the Argives, furious-fain for their battle-aid.
 And so when they came unto where their most and their best were arrayed, 780
 Where shoulder to shoulder around Diomedes the hero they stood,
 Grim-showing as ravening lions whose jaws are bedabbled with blood,
 Or like to the beasts of tameless fury, the boars of the wood,
 There Hérê the white-armed stood, and rang through the battle her cry —
 As great-heart Stentor the brazen-voiced seemed she to the eye, 785
 For his shout was the shout of fifty men : so shouted she :—
 "Shame on you, Argives, ye bywords ! dastards goodly to see !
 So long as Achilles the godlike went forth to the battle with you,
 Never was Trojan that stepped the gates Dardanian through ;
 For they dreaded the lightning-gleam of his terrible-storming spear : 790

But now from the city afar by the ships fight they without fear ! " [cried.

Then their courage was kindled, their souls were aflame for the word that she
And Athénê the grey-eyed sprang to the son of Tydeus' side.

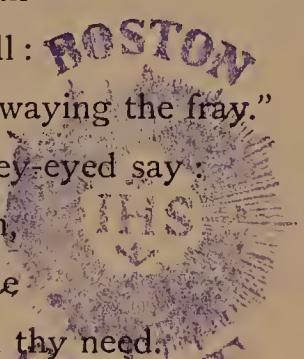
By his chariot and horses she found him, the lord of battle-craft,
Cooling the burning wound that was dealt by Pandarus' shaft : 795
For sorely the toil-sweat galled it by reason of that broad band
That bare up the orb of his shield, and aweary grew his hand.
He was lifting the baldric, and wiping the dark-hued blood away,
When the Goddess laid her hand on the yoke, and thus did she say :

" Ah, not as the sire is the son of Tydeus' loins that came ! 800
Little of stature was Tydeus, but mighty in battle-fame.

Yea, once I commanded him saying ' Take heed that thou fight with none,
Nor defiantly bear thee,' when aidless he came unto Thebes and alone,
On an ambassage unto the host of the princes of Kadmus' race.

' Sit thou at the meat in quiet,' I said, ' in the feastful place.' 805
But he bare, as in days overpast, the soul that never quailed ;
And he challenged the princes of Thebes, and in whatso he strove, he prevailed
Full lightly : so present a helper was I unto him that day.
But for thee—of a surety I stand by thy side, and I guard alway,
And with all mine heart I command thee to fight with the Trojan foe. 810
But thy limbs be faint and weary with rushing to and fro,
Or spiritless terror hath gotten thee. Surely if that be so,
No son of the warrior Tydeus thou art, nor of Oineus' line."

Spake Diomedes the strong, and he answered the lips divine :
" I know thee, Goddess, daughter of Zeus the Aegis-lord : 815

Wherefore my strait will I tell, neither hide in mine heart the word.
 No spiritless terror is this, neither slackness that holdeth mine hand ;
 But mindful am I of thy charge, and I heed thine own command.
 For thou saidst that I should not in conflict against the Blessed stand :
 Save only if Aphroditê the daughter of Zeus should pass 820
 Into battle, I should not spare her, but smite with the keen-whetted brass.
 Wherefore I now give ground myself, and the Argives all
 Have I bidden to gather close for a steadfast battle-wall : 
 For mine eyes have discerned yon Arês triumphantly swaying the fray.”

Unto him made answer Athênê, and thus did the Grey-eyed say : 825
 “ Diomedes, thou joy of mine heart, O Tydeus’ hero-son,
 Fear thou not Arês for this ;—I say unto thee, fear none
 Of the Deathless, so present a helper am I unto thee in thy need.
 Come then, against Arês the first thy battle-trampers speed.
 Close with him, smite him, the wild-heart, and be not at all dismayed 830
 For the mad fiend Arês, the curse from his birth, the renegade,
 Who but yesterday spake unto me and to Hêrê, and pledged him to aid
 The Argive host, and withal to strive against Troy in the war :
 But now he consorteth with Trojans ; forgotten the Argives are.”

Then thrust she Sthenelus down to the earth from the chariot-seat, 835
 Drawing him back ; and he leapt from the car with eager feet.
 Then into the chariot beside Diomedes mounted she,
 The battle-fain Goddess : and groaned the oaken axletree,
 With the weight of a Goddess dread and a hero heavy-fraught.
 And the whip and the reins in her hands hath Pallas Athênê caught. 840

Forthright against Arès first those thundering hoofs she sped.
 Even then was he stripping the mail from giant Periphias dead,
 Aetolia's mightiest champion, Ochesius' goodly son.
 Him was the Blood-fiend spoiling : then did Athénê don
 The helmet of Hades, to hide her from terrible Arès' eye. 845
 And Earth curse Arès looked, and beheld Diomedes anigh.
 Forthright he forsook gigantic Periphias there as he lay
 On the spot where first he had slain him and torn his life away ;
 And straight on the tamer of horses he rushed, Diomedes the strong.
 So anigh to each other they came, flashing forth from the battle-throng. 850
 First over the yoke and the reins of the horses Arès thrust
 With his lance of brass, mad-eager to bring down his life in the dust.
 But the Goddess Athénê the Grey-eyed the lance in her hand hath ta'en,
 And up from the chariot hath thrust it to spend its fury in vain.
 Then Diomedes the battle-helper drove at his foe 855
 With his brass-headed spear, and onward Athénê sped the blow
 Even to the place where the taslet girded his loins, and there
 Lighted the point of the lance, and through the fair skin tare.
 Then backward he plucked the spear, and brazen Arès yelled.
 Louder the onset-cry of thousands nine ne'er swelled, 860
 Nor of thousands ten, when they charge mad-kindled with battle-delight.
 And trembling gat hold on Achaians and Trojans, and sore affright,
 So mighty, so hideous the yell was of Arès insatiate of fight.
 As the darkness in heaven when blackens a lurid thundercloud,
 When past is the burning heat, and the winds blow fierce and loud, 865

So Arês the brazen in Tydeus' son Diomedes' eyes
 Seemed, as he fled amid clouds to the broad-o'erarching skies.
 And with speed to the home of the Gods, to the steep of Olympus, he won,
 And in anguish of soul sat down by King Zeus, Kronos' son.
 And he showed the immortal blood as adown from the wound it ran ; 870
 And the winged words moaned from his lips as in pitiful voice he began :
 " Allfather, art thou not indignant for violence wrought in thy sight ?
 Evermore have the Gods tribulation and horror of mischief and spite
 At the hands of their fellows, when fain we would bless the children of earth.
 With thee are we all at feud : thou gavest yon mad maid birth, 875
 The destroyer, whose thoughts evermore be of lawless deeds and fell.
 For the rest of the Gods, even we in the halls of Olympus that dwell,
 Unto thee bow down in subjection, and all thy behests do we heed ;
 But her—thou hast never rebuked her, never in word nor in deed ;
 But thou lettest her be, for thyself hast begotten this pestilent child, 880
 Who hath hounded on but now Diomedes the outrage-wild
 Even on Gods everliving to rush in his fury accurst ;
 For the Cyprian Queen in the hand at the wrist hath he wounded first,
 Thereafter on me, even me, like a God in his anger he burst.
 But my feet swift-flying delivered me, else long time had I lain 885
 Suffering anguish there midst the ghastly heaps of the slain,
 Or had lived on strengthless-stricken by stabs of the brazen lance."
 Made answer the Cloudrack-sweeper, with stern and scornful glance :
 " Sit not, thou renegade, making thy whimpering moan at my side !
 Most hateful thou art unto me of the Gods in Olympus that bide. 890

Dear unto thee evermore is contention and battle and blood.
 Thine is thy mother's unbearable spirit, the stubborn mood
 Of Hêrê, for hardly her wild self-will by my words may I rein.
 By her were they moved, I trow, that dealt unto thee this pain.
 Howbeit I will not endure that thy pangs shall be long upon thee, 895
 Seeing thou art the son of my loins, and thy mother bare thee to me.
 But if any beside of the Gods were thy father, thou ruinous bane,
 Lower than Uranus' sons long since thine head had lain."

Then he bade Paiaion the Healer for Arê's help draw nigh :
 And pain-quelling salves on the wound did the Leech-god spread, whereby 900
 He restored him, for not as the deathlings he was, that be born but to die.
 And as fig-juice hasteth to turn white milk to a sudden curd,
 That the thin-flowing standeth in clots when scarce by the hand it is stirred,
 So Arês the wild-heart's blood-flow changed into flesh forthright.
 And Hêbê bathed him, and clothed him in garments radiant-bright : 905
 And by Zeus Kronion he sat him adown, in pride of his might.

Then came they aback, those twain, unto great Zeus' palace-hall,
 Hêrê of Argos, Alalkomenean Athênen withal,
 Having stayed fell Arês the Earth curse from manslaying battle-brawl.

BOOK VI.

How Andromachê, Hector's wife, took her last farewell of the hero.

SO left unto menfolk was Troy and Achaia's terrible war :
And hither and thither the battle-rush swayed o'er the plain evermore,
And from host unto host ever lightened the lances' brazen gleam
In the land that lieth between Skamander and Simoïs stream.

It was Aias, Achaia's bulwark, Telamon's son, that first 5
Brought victory-light to his men, and the Trojan war-ranks burst,
When his spear-cast made the Thracians' mightiest champion fall,
Akamas son of Eussôrus, a warrior stalwart and tall.

On the ridge of his heavily-crested helm did the javelin light, 10
And into his forehead it plunged, for the brazen head flame-bright
Burst through the bone, and the death-mist shrouded his eyes with night.

Diomedes the battle-helper hurled Axylus down,
Teuthranus' son, who dwelt in Arisbê the fair-built town,
A mighty man of wealth, and the needy blessed his name,
For he dwelt by the highway, and welcomed with guest-cheer whoso came. 15

Yet was there none of them all to thrust himself that day
 'Twixt him and the bitter death, but both did Tydeides slay,
 Both him and his henchman Kalesius, the man into battle that drove [grave.
 The steeds of his chariot : and these twain passed through the gates of the
 Then were Opheltius and Dresus low by Euryalus laid : 20
 Pedasus then and Aisēpus he chased, whom the Fountain-maid
 Abarbareē had borne to Bukolion years agone :
 Now Bukolion the comely was sprung from the haughty Laomedon.
 In birth was he first of his sons, but was born of a maid unwed :
 And he met that nymph in the days when his flock to the pasture he led. 25
 So the Naiad conceived by the love of the shepherd, and twin sons bare :
 But the strength of their glorious limbs was unstrung in the battle there
 By Mekisteus' son, and their harness of war from their shoulders he tare.
 Polypoites the battle-bider hath stricken Astyalus down :
 By the lance of Odysseus Pidytes, a lord of Perkotē-town, 30
 Unto Hades was sped : by Teucer the stout Aretaon is slain :
 And the glittering spear of Antilochus Nestor's son is the bane
 Of Ablerus ; and King Agamemnon in death laid Elatus low.
 On Pedasus' height, where Satnjoeis' fair waters flow,
 He abode. Then Lēitus smote down Phylakus fast as he fled : 35
 And now hath the hand of Eurypylus laid Melanthius dead.
 Menelaus the battle-helper Adrestus alive hath ta'en ;
 For his horses stumbled, as raging with terror they scoured the plain,
 On the branch of a tamarisk shrub, and the pole of the curvèd car
 They snapped off short, and away to the city they galloped afar 40

On the path whereby the others in panic were fleeing fast :
 But their lord from the chariot-seat to the earth by the wheel was cast.
 Down on his face in the dust hath he fallen : then to his side
 With spear uplifted did Atreus' son Menelaus stride :
 But Adrestus embraced his knees, and besought him with passionate cries : 45
 "Take me alive, O Atreus' son, for the ransom-price !
 Rich is my father : his chambers with manifold treasures be fraught ;
 There lieth the brass, and the gold is there, and the iron huge-wrought ;
 And my father would lavish thereof, he would nowise count the cost,
 If he heard that alive I lay mid the ships of the Danaan host." 50

So spake he, and moved was his spirit to hear that suppliant plead ;
 And now had he straightway given him in charge to his henchman, to lead
 To the swift Achaian ships,—but another thrust before,
 For thitherward ran Agamemnon, and chode with his brother sore :

"Soft-heart Menelaus!—and why dost thou take such tender thought 55
 Of the foe ? Shall it be because of the marvellous kindness wrought [doom
 To thine house by the Trojans ?—Let none of them 'scape from the swift sheer
 To be dealt by our hands, no, not the babe in the mother's womb,
 So it be but a manchild : it shall not escape ; let all the race
 Of Ilium utterly perish, and leave on the earth no trace." 60

So spake he, and turned from ruth, forasmuch as he counselled aright,
 His brother : his heart was hardened, his hand thrust back from his sight
 Adrestus : deep in his flank did the lord Agamemnon smite.
 Backward he fell ; on his breast his heel did Atreides set,
 And the ashen spear drew forth with his heart's blood ruddy-wet. 65

Then Nestor cried to the Argives, and sent his voice afar :

“ Friends, Danaan heroes, henchmen of Arêṣ the Lord of War !
 Let none take thought for the plunder, to tarry behind from the fray,
 Thinking to bear to the galleys the goodlier burden of prey,
 But slaughter the foe : thereafter in peace shall ye gather the spoil, 70
 When over the plain wide-strewn is the fruit of your battle-toil.”

So spake he, and kindled their courage, their hearts were mightily moved :
 And again the Trojans before the Achaians Arêṣ-beloved
 Into Ilium had fled, for their hearts were faint, and their hands hung down ;
 But lo, to Aeneas and Hector a seer of peerless renown 75
 Came, Helenus, Priam’s son, and with eager lips did he say :

“ Aeneas and Hector, ye be the mightiest battle-stay
 Of the Trojan and Lycian hosts, for the chief of our strength be ye
 For devising of battle or counsel, whatso our need may be.
 Stand therefore, and here in front of the gates shall ye pass through the host, 80
 And rally the warfolk, or ever their manhood be utterly lost,
 And they flee to the arms of their wives mid the foemen’s scorn and joy.
 But when ye have roused up again to the battle the ranks of Troy,
 Here will we bide, and against the Danaans’ onslaught stand,
 How wearied soever, for heavily presseth necessity’s hand. 85
 But, Hector, go thou hence to the city, and speak in the ears
 Of thy mother and mine : let her gather the women stricken in years
 To the citadel, even the fane of Athêñē the flashing-eyed.
 With her key let her open the holy doors, and fling them wide.
 Let the robe most fair in her eyes, and whose folds the amplest fall, 90

Even that which she cherisheth most of the treasures that shine in her hall,
 On the knees of Athêne the lovely-tressed be laid by her hand ;
 Therewithal let her vow twelve kine at the Goddess's altar to stand,
 Yearlings, unsmitten of goads, if in mercy she will but spare
 Troy-town, and the wives and the helpless babes that be sheltered there, 95
 If so be she will turn back from Ilium the holy Tydeus' child,
 The stalwart panic-wafter, the hero tameless-wild,
 Who hath proved him the mightiest man of all the Achaians, I trow ;
 Yea, not even Achilles the war-lord daunted us so,
 Though they name him the Goddess-born, for this man in fury of fight 100
 Is filled with exceeding madness, that none may match his might.”

So did he counsel, and Hector disdained not his brother's rede.
 Down from his chariot he leapt to the ground in battle-weed,
 And brandishing keen-whetted lances he ranged the host about,
 Cheering them on, and he kindled the terrible onset-shout. 105
 Then turned they, and rallied, and met the Achaians face to face :
 And the Argive men gave back, and from slaughter refrained for a space ; [sky
 For it seemed them that one of the Deathless had come from the star-studded
 Down to the help of the Trojans, they rallied so dauntlessly.
 And Hector shouted aloud down the ranks of the Trojans' war : 110
 “ Great-hearted Trojans, and ye of our war-aid famous afar,
 Quit you like men, my friends, and forget not your onset-fire,
 The while unto Ilium I go, and to elder and council-sire
 I speak, and withal to our wives in the battle-guarded home,
 To put up their prayers to the Gods, and to vow them a hecatomb.” 115

So shouted the bright-helmed Hector, and fast from the field did he stride,
 While clashed against ankle and neck the round of the dark bull-hide,
 The rim that encompassed his boss-set buckler on every side.

Then Glaukus, Hippolochus' seed, and the son of Tydeus' might
 'Twixt army and army met, full fain of the grapple of fight.

120

Onward the heroes came till now they were drawn full nigh :
 Then first did the battle-helper, the lord Diomedes, cry :

" Mightiest, who of the deathling children of men art thou ?
 For never I marked thee in glory-crowning battle ere now.

But in front of the rest this day for a champion forth hast thou stood
 Biding my long-shadowed spear in thy desperate hardihood.

125

They be children of heart-stricken parents that brave my battle-mood.
 But and if thou be one of the Deathless Ones come down from the sky,
 Of a truth I will nowise fight with the Gods, the abiders on high. [130]
 For in sooth to the offspring of Dryas, Lycurgus the strong, were there given
 Few days on the earth, forasmuch as he strove with the dwellers in heaven.

For the nymphs that nursed Dionysus, the frenzy-glorious child,
 He hunted adown Nyseion the holy, and terror-wild

Cast they their wands to the earth, by Lycurgus the murderer chased
 With his goad fierce-smiting, the while Dionysus in panic-struck haste

135

Plunged in the sea-wave, and Thetis upreached her arms from below,
 And her breast was his refuge as sorely he quaked at the threats of his foe.
 But for this cause wroth were the Gods, the abiders in bliss unmarred,
 And Kronion with blindness smote him : the days of the evil-starred
 Were few, for that all the Deathless accounted him cursed in their sight. 140

—Nay, with the Gods bliss-throned would I nowise adventure the fight.
But and if thou be one of the children of men that of earth-fruit eat,
Draw nigh, that the toils of the doom-net the sooner may snare thy feet.”

Answered Hippolochus' glorious son, and thus spake he :
“ Tydeides the mighty-hearted, what is my lineage to thee ? 145
Even as the frail generations of leaves be the lives of men.
These leaves on the earth by the wind be scattered : with those again
Doth the woodland bourgeon and bloom, when stirreth the spring in the spray :
So this generation of men springeth up, that passeth away.
Yet if thou wouldest learn this, hearken, and so shalt thou know full well 150
Our lineage—good sooth, full many the tale thereof could tell !
In the heart of Argos there lieth the city of Ephyré.
There Sisyphus dwelt : most crafty of all men on earth was he ;—
Sisyphus Aiolus' scion ;—and Glaukus was born his son ;
And Glaukus thereafter begat the princely Bellerophon. 155
And beauty and lovely manhood the high Gods gave unto him.
But Proitus devised his bane, and his thoughts were vengeful-grim.
Therewithal was he mightier far, so he drove him forth of the land
Of the Argives ; for Zeus had subdued the people under his hand.
Now the wife of Proitus, Anteia the fair, in her mad lust sought 160
To be joined in secret embrace with the prince : yet nowise she wrought
The upright of heart to her will, Bellerophon virtuous-wise ;
Wherefore she spake unto Proitus the king a tale of lies :
‘ Thou art worthy, O Proitus, to die, if thou spill not Bellerophon's life,
Who hath tempted in vain, and thereafter was fain to have forced thy wife.’ 165

So spake she, and wroth for the story of shame was the heart of the king :
 Yet he shrank from his blood, for it seemed to his soul an unholy thing.
 But to Lycia he sent him, and baleful tokens he gave him to bear,
 A folded tablet, with many a death-fraught sign traced there :
 And he bade show this to the sire of Anteia, that so he might die. 170
 So he fared unto Lycia, brought on his way by the Gods most high.
 And he came to the land where the waters of Xanthus swiftly glide ;
 There welcome and worship he had of the lord of Lycia the wide.
 Nine days did he banquet his guest, nine oxen he slew for the feast :
 But when on the tenth the Dawn rose-fingered brightened the east, 175
 Then did he question the prince, and would fain behold the sign,
 The token of him that had wedded the child of his royal line.
 So he looked on the murder-token : then bade he Bellerophon first
 To slay the Chimaira, the waster resistless, the horror accurst.
 God-fashioned it was, not gendered of men : a lion before, 180
 And to rearward a dragon, the midst a she-goat's semblance bore ;
 And the breath of her mouth was the terrible fury of ravening flame.
 Nathless he slew her, obeying the signs from the Gods that came.
 Then went he forth to the fray with the Solymi war-renowned,
 And ever he named it the mightiest fight that his hands had found. 185
 Then smote he the host of the Amazons, battle-peers of men.
 But the snare was spread in the way as homeward he hied him again.
 For the king out of Lycia chose him her mightiest men of war,
 And he set them in ambush : but never returned they home any more,
 For every man of the traitors peerless Bellerophon slew. 190

And the eyes of the king were opened, the god-born hero he knew.

Then said he, ‘ Abide thou with me : lo, I plight thee my child for thy bride,
And I give thee the half of my kingdom, the glory of Lycia the wide.’

And the people gave of their land, a matchless-fair domain,
Goodly with vineyard and orchard and golden-rippling grain. 195

And the wife of the wise Bellerophon bare to him children fair,
Isander, Hippolochus, Laodameia moreover she bare.

With Laodameia Zeus the Lord of Counsel lay,
And her child was Sarpedon the godlike, who flasheth in brass-array.

But it came to pass that the high Gods hated Bellerophon, 200
And over the desolate plain of Aleion he wandered alone
Devouring his heart, and shunning the ways that menfolk trod.

And Isander, his son, of Arês the carnage-insatiate God
In battle against the Solymi war-renowned was slain.

And his daughter was smitten of Artemis Queen of the Silver Rein. 205
But my father Hippolochus was, yea, I name me of noblest strain ;
And he sent me to Troy, and he earnestly charged me once and again
Ever upward to strive to the highest, and still to be best of the best,
And to shame not the line of my sires, who were ever the princeliest
Of the princely of Ephyrê-town and of Lycia-land the wide. 210

Lo, this is my lineage, and this is my blood, and herein is my pride.”

Then Diomedes the battle-helper rejoiced to hear ;
And into the all-sustaining earth he thrust his spear ;
And with words of peace he cried to the shepherd of Lycia’s fold :
“ Surely my friend art thou, for our fathers were friends of old ! 215

In the halls of Oineus the godlike a noble guest of yore,
Even Bellerophon, tarried through feastful days a score.

Yea, each to the other they gave fair gifts on the parting day :
A sword-belt Oineus gave bright-dyed with the purple gay ;
And a double-chalice cup of gold Bellerophon gave. 220

I left the same in mine halls when I sailed the dark sea-wave.

But Tydeus my sire I remember not, for a babe was I
When he left me, and fared unto Thebes with the host of Achaia—to die.

Wherefore thy bond-friend am I in the midst of Argos mine home,
And thou in Lycia mine, whensoe'er to their land I shall come. 225

Even in the turmoil of battle each other's spears will we shun :

I shall find full many a Trojan, and allies many an one
To slay, whom my feet shall o'ertake, or a God shall deliver to me ;

And for thee be Achaians enow, to smite as thy strength shall be.

And now will we make exchange of war-gear, that all men may know 230
That the troth of our fathers is ours, and the love of long-ago."

So spake they, and down from their chariots to earth they leapt, they twain ;
And they clasped right hand in hand, and they plighted their troth again.

Lo how Kronion from Glaukus the world-wise heart hath ta'en !
For lightly he changeth his mail with the hero of Tydeus' line, 235
Giving golden for brazen, the price of a hundred beeves for nine.

Now when Hector was come to the Skaian gate and the oak by the wall,
Around him there ran the wives of Troy and the daughters withal.
And they asked him of sons and of brethren, of husbands and friends asked they.
But for all reply he spake unto each after other " Pray, 240

O pray to the Gods!"—and on many a heart death's shadow lay.
And when unto Priam's palace exceeding fair he came
With its gleaming marble of long colonnades,—and within the same
Were there fifty chambers fashioned of cunningly carven stone,
Chamber by chamber, an endless line ; and every one 245
Was the bower where slumbered a son of the King with his princess-bride ;
And overagainst them, even on the courtyard's farther side,
Twelve chambers of polished stone for the daughters of Priam there were,
Chamber by high-roofed chamber upbuilted ; and slumbered there
The sons-in-law of the King with their wives, the chaste and fair :— 250
Then came his bountiful mother forth to meet her son,
With Laodikē, fairest of all her daughters to look upon :
And she clasped his hand in her own, and with eager words 'gan say :
“ Son, why hast thou hitherward come from the desperate-daring fray ?
Ah surely the sons of Achaia—the name accurst—press hard 255
Battling around us, and thee hath thy soul sped hitherward
To uplift from the citadel's height thine hands unto Zeus in prayer.
Nay, tarry a space, and the honey-sweet wine to thine hand will I bear,
To the end thou mayst pour unto Zeus and the Deathless enthroned above
First, and thereafter mayst strengthen thine heart, if thou drink thereof ; 260
For that wine, when a man is forspent, doth exceedingly quicken his might,
Even as thou art forwearied defending thy friends in the fight.”

And with hands unwashen I dare not the flame-flashing wine outpour
 Unto Zeus, it may nowise be that a man should stand and adore
 Kronion the Cloudrack-clad all dabbled in filth and gore.

But thou to the temple of Pallas Athénê the Prey-giver fare :

With oblations go up ; be the ancient women assembled there : 270

Let the robe most fair in thine eyes, and whose folds the amplest fall,
 Even that which thou cherishest most of the treasures that shine in thine hall,
 On the knees of Athénê the lovely-tressed be laid by thine hand ;
 Therewithal do thou vow twelve kine at the Goddess's altar to stand,
 Yearlings, unsmitten of goads, if in mercy she will but spare 275
 Troy-town, and the wives and the helpless babes that be sheltered there ;
 If so be she will turn back from Ilium the holy Tydeus' child,
 The stalwart panic-waster, the hero tameless-wild.

Thou therefore fare to the fane of the Driver of the Prey,

And I will away unto Paris, to call him hence to the fray, 280

If perchance he will hearken my voice :—would God the earth straightway
 Might ope for his grave—this curse raised up by the Lord of the Sky
 That the Trojans might perish, and Priam and all his seed, thereby !

If I might but behold him passing adown unto Hades' abode,

I should deem that mine heart had forgotten its sorrow, and cast its load." 285

Then hasted his mother, and gave command to the maids in her hall,
 And they fared up and down through the city the ancient women to call.

But the Queen passed on, and now in her scented bower she stands :
 There lay the broidery-glorious robes, the work of the hands
 Of Sidonian women, brought far over the waters wide,

290

Even from Sidon, when Prince Alexander the godlike hied
 On the sea-track fleeing with Helen, the mighty-fathered bride.
 And from these for Athénê she taketh a lovely-woven pall ;
 Brightest its broideries shone, and its folds swept widest of all ;
 And it gleamed and it flashed as a star, mid her treasures the deepest it lay. 295
 Then with the throng of the ancient women she hied her away.

So they came to the castled crag and Athénê's stately fane :
 And Theano the fair-cheeked opened the doors for the suppliant train,—
 The daughter of Kisseus, the wife of Antenor the horse-quelling lord ;
 For the Trojans had made her priestess, Athénê's temple-ward :— 300
 And they lifted their hands to Athénê, and woeful-wild they shrieked ;
 And the priceless mantle she took, Theano the beautiful-cheeked ;
 On the knees of Athénê she laid it, the Maid of the glorious hair,
 And she cried to the daughter of Zeus most high with vow and prayer :

“ O Lady Athénê, City-deliverer, Queen of the Sky ! 305
 Break thou Diomedes' spear, vouchsafe that its lord may lie
 In front of the Skaian gate in death outstretched on his face.
 Then straight will we sacrifice twelve beeves in thine holy place,
 Yearlings, unsmitten of goads, if thou wilt but in ruth show grace
 Unto Troy and her wives, and the innocent babe at the mother's breast.” 310
 So praying she spake, but Pallas Athénê denied the request.

Thus to the daughter of Zeus most high in prayer they cried.
 But Hector on to the dwelling of Alexander hath hied,
 The beautiful house that he built with them that in cunning of hand
 Were the chiefest builder-craftsmen in all the Trojan land : 315

Yea, they fashioned it, bower and hall, and the garth encompassing,
 On the castled steep, by the dwellings of Hector and Priam the king.
 So Hector the Zeus-beloved passed in ; in his hands he bore
 The lance of cubits eleven, and lightning leapt before
 From the brazen head of the spear, and the gold that clasped it round. 320

There, setting in order his beautiful armour, the prince he found
 Handling the shield and the corslet, the bow and the war-shafts keen :
 And amidst of her handmaid-train sat Helen the Argive Queen ;
 And lovely their fashionings were as the work of their hands she sped.
 And Hector beheld and was wroth, and with words of scorn he said : 325

“ Ho thou, what hast thou to do to nurse in thine heart this spite ?
 Lo how the people be falling around the city in fight !
 And for thee is the war-shout wakened, aflame is the battle for thee
 These high-built ramparts around ;—thyself wouldest rage to see
 Another that played the craven and shrank from the bitter fray. 330

Up, lest the city be wasted with ravening fire this day !”

Answered and spake unto him Alexander the godlike wight :
 “ Hector, true be thy words, and thy chiding is meet and right :
 Therefore the cause will I tell thee, hearken and understand :
 It is not as for indignation or wrath with the folk of my land 335
 That I sit in my chamber : but hands must tarry when heart is sore.
 But now by her words hath my wife awakened mine heart unto war,
 Soft-pleading—yea and myself I count it better so :—
 Sooth, victory swayeth from man to man—I will meet my foe !
 Go to now, tarry a space, till I don my war-array ; 340

Or go, and I follow : I ween thou shalt not win first to the fray."

So spake he, but Hector the bright-helmed answered him never a word.

Then lowly Helen spake to the Hero anger-stirred :

" O brother of me the shameless hound, the horror accurst,

Would God that on that same day when my mother beheld me first 345

The hurricane-blast of a wind of destruction had swooped upon me,

And borne to a mountain lone or the surge of the sighing sea !

Then ere these deeds had befallen the waters above me had roiled.

But seeing the Gods have ordained it, and fashioned our ills from of old,

Would God I had been but the wife of a nobler man, that could hear 350

The indignation-cry and the manifold heart-stinging jeer !

But he—no wisdom hath place in his heart, neither shall it be so

In the days to be ; and the harvest thereof shall he reap, I trow.

But prithee come in, and here for a little sit down to rest,

O brother, for thine is the burden, the sorrow-darkened breast 355

For me the shameless hound, and for Alexander's sin,

Upon whom there is laid of Zeus an evil doom, to win

A mockery-song on the lips of the men of an unborn day."

Unto her did Hector the mighty, the splendour-morioned, say :

" Nay, Helen, no rest for me ; in vain of thy love shalt thou plead ; 360

For now is my spirit yearning to help the battle-need

Of the Trojans, for sorely they lack me who look for my face in vain.

But this man rouse thou—nay, of his own heart's will let him strain

That he fail not to overtake me ere forth of the city I fare ;

For now to mine home will I pass to look on mine household there, 365

And my wife the well-beloved, and my son the innocent-fair.
 For I know not if I shall hereafter return to behold them again,
 Or if now of the Gods I be doomed by Achaia's sons to be slain."

Then forth went Hector, and vanished his helmet's wavering flame ;
 And unto his beautiful-builded house with speed he came.

370

Yet he found not Andromachê snowy-armed in hall or bower ;
 But she, with her child and a handmaid fair-attired, on a tower
 Was standing the while, and she wailed in her anguish, and moaned in her fear.
 So when Hector beheld not his queenly-noble wife anear,

To the hall of the women he strode, and he spake from the threshold-stone : 375

" Now tell me, my handmaids, and see that ye speak sheer truth alone :—
 Whither away is Andromachê gone from mine halls this day ?
 To my sisters or fair-robed wives of my brethren went she away ?
 Or passed she up with the rest of the fair-tressed ones that hied
 To Athênê's fane, if her anger might haply be pacified ? "

380

Then to the hero a diligent stewardess-handmaid replied :
 " Forasmuch as my lord hath commanded, requiring the truth of me,—
 She hath gone not thy sisters or fair-robed wives of thy brethren to see,
 Nor passed she up with the rest of the fair-tressed ones that hied
 To Athênê's fane, if her anger might haply be pacified.

385

But now hath she climbed a huge-built tower, for she heard the tale
 That the Trojans be sorely pressed, and the men of Achaia prevail.
 For this cause hence to the wall hath she hasted terror-wild,
 Like one distraught, and beside her the nurse went bearing the child."

So spake that stewardess-handmaid, and Hector with hurrying feet

390

Went back by the way that he came through street after fair-built street.

But when as he fared through the mighty city he came at the last
To the Skaian gate, and forth to the plain in a moment had passed,
Came running to meet him the wife that he won with gifts untold,
Even Andromachê child of Eëtion mighty-souled,—

395

Eëtion, who dwelt under Plakos dark with its forest-cloak,
In Thêbê the Plakos-shadowed, and ruled the Cilician folk ;
Even he was the king whose daughter was brass-mailed Hector's bride ;—
So met that lady her lord, and her handmaid came at her side
With the boy on her bosom, a wordless-prattling blossom of love,
Darling of Hector, like some fair star slid down from above :—
Skamandrius Hector named him, but all men called the son
Astyanax, for that Ilium's warder was Hector alone.

400

Then on the boy did the hero silently gaze and smile ;
But Andromachê stood by his side, and her tears fell fast the while ;
And clasping she clung to his hand, and she uttered her heart's sad thought :
“ O husband, husband, thy courage will slay thee !—thou pitiest not
Thine helpless-innocent babe, and thy misery-fated wife
Who soon shall be widowed, for soon the Achaians shall spill thy life
All rushing upon thee as one, and better it were for me
Bereft of thee to be laid in the earth, for there never shall be
Any solace for this, when thou in the toils of doom shalt lie,
But anguish alone !—ah me, nor father nor mother have I !
For Achilles the godlike dealt my father the swift death-stroke,
And he utterly wasted the fair-built burg of Cilicia's folk,

405

410

415

Even Thêbê the lofty-gated, and smote Eëtion dead ;
 Yet he spoiled not his corse, for his spirit was strangely ashamed and adread.
 In his war-gear curious-wrought did he burn him ; a great earth-mound
 Over his bones he heaped, and elms were planted around
 By the Nymphs of the Mountain, the daughters of Zeus the Aegis-lord. 420
 Seven brethren had I when our halls were unwasted yet of the sword ;
 And they passed all down into Hades' abode on the selfsame day,
 For every one did fleetfoot Achilles the godlike slay
 Amidst of their trailfoot kine and the flocks of their white-fleeced sheep.
 And my mother, the queen of the town 'neath Plakos' wood-clad steep, 425
 With his war-spoil hither he brought amidst of a captive train ;
 Yet for a measureless ransom he set her free again ;
 But she died in the halls of her father, by Artemis' arrow slain.
 O Hector, Hector, my father art thou, and my mother withal,
 And my brother—I have but thee, O husband stalwart and tall ! 430
 Have pity upon me, belovèd ; abide thou here on the tower,
 Lest thou orphan thy child, lest thou widow thy wife, in one short hour.
 Stay thou the host by the fig-tree : there might a foeman fall
 Best on the city, and lightliest there might scale her wall.
 There twice the Aiantes twain with the best of their war-array, 435
 And twice Idomeneus battle-renowned, have made assay,
 And the war-folk of Atreus' sons, and of Tydeus' mighty seed ;
 Whether it were that they hearkened therein to a soothsayer's rede,
 Or their own war-wisdom and courage pricked them on to the deed."

And Hector the mighty, the splendour-helmeted, answered and said : 440

“ Yea, wife, all this do I also remember ; but sorely I dread
 Troy’s sons, and her scornful daughters royally-robed, and the sneer
 Of the lips that will mock if I shrink from the war as in craven fear.
 And mine own soul crieth against it, for have not I learned evermore
 To stand in the forefront of fight, and to play the man in the war, 445
 Winning renown for the name of my father, yea, and mine own ?
 For of this is mine heart assured, to mine inmost soul is it known :
 The day wherein Ilium the holy shall perish will come, it is near
 Unto Priam withal, and the folk of the king of the ashen spear.
 Yet it is not the grief that shall come on the Trojans that moveth me so, 450
 Nor yet is mine heart so heavy for Priam and Hekabê’s woe,
 Nor yet for my brethren, the many and valiant, that low in the dust [thrust,
 Shall fall, whom the hands of their foes through the gates of the grave shall
 As for thee, when a mail-clad Achaian to bondage shall lead thee away
 Weeping, and take from thine eyes the light of freedom’s day ; 455
 And in Argos my darling shall weave at another’s behest, and bring
 The pitcher at dawn from Messêis or Hypereia’s spring
 Sore loth—but the yoke of resistless constraint o’er thy neck shall be cast :
 And thus shall they say, as their hard eyes watch thy tears flow fast :
 ‘ Lo, this is the wife of Hector, the chiefest in battle-renown 460
 Of the horse-quelling Trojans in days when they warred round Ilium-town.’
 So shall they speak : on thy soul at my name new anguish shall fall
 With aching of heart for thy hero, thy shield from the lot of the thrall.
 But me may the grave-mound cover, the earth my dead face veil
 Or ever I hear thy shriek, and thine enthralment’s tale.” 465

So spake he, and Hector the glorious stretched his arms to his son :
 But back to the fair-girt nurse's bosom the little one
 Shrunk crying aloud, at the face of his father sudden-adread,
 In affright at the glittering brass with the dark mane overshed,
 For awful it seemed in his eyes overglooming the helmet's light. 470
 Then loving father and queenly mother laughed at the sight.
 But Hector the glorious took the helm from his head forthright,
 And he set on the earth at his feet that beacon-flame of fight.
 And he took up his child in his arms, and he kissed him, and tossed him on high :
 Therewithal unto Zeus and the rest of the Gods in prayer did he cry : 475

“ O Zeus and the rest of the Gods, vouchsafe that this child of mine
 May, even as I, mid the Trojans in glory-pre-eminence shine,
 So valiant in prowess, and sit in his might upon Ilium's throne,
 Till the people shall say, ‘ The father is far by the son outdone ! ’
 As he cometh from war ; and the slaughtered foemen's spoils blood-dyed 480
 May he bear, that the heart of his mother may swell with joy and pride.”

As he spake, in the arms of his dear-loved wife he laid his child ;
 And she in her fragrant bosom received her darling, and smiled,
 Smiled through her tears, and her husband beheld her pity-stirred,
 And with kind love-lingered touch did he soothe her, and spake the word : 485

“ Nay, break not thine heart, my beloved, with sorrow over-great ;
 For no man shall hurl me adown unto Hades against my fate.
 But I ween there is none that may flee from the doom ordained at his birth,
 Nor the craven, nor yet the valiant, when once he is born on the earth.
 But thou, enter into the house, to the labours of woman give heed, 490

To the toils of the spindle and loom, and command thy maidens to speed
 Their tasks, but for war shall the men take thought, and for these shall it be,
 Even all that in Ilium abide, and chiefest of all for me."

So spake he, and Hector the glorious his helm from the earth hath ta'en,
 Dark-maned : and his dear-loved wife hath hied her homeward again, 495
 Oft-looking back, while fell her tears like the winter rain.

And it was so, that when she was come to the mansion builded fair
 Of the slayer of heroes, she found the throng of her handmaids there ;
 And her mourning hath shaken their hearts, and awakened the wail of their grief :
 Yea, in his halls, while he lived, were they wailing for Hector the chief ; 500
 For they deemed he would never come back from the midst of the battle again,
 Escaped from the might and the hands of the strong Achaian men.

Nor lingered Paris long 'neath his hall-roof's stately height :
 But so soon as he donned his war-gear with brass all cunningly dight,
 Through the city he sped in the pride of his swift feet bounding light. 505
 As a stallion manger-fed that hath snapped his halter in twain,
 And speedeth with thunder of galloping feet far over the plain
 To plunge, as so oft he hath plunged, in the river lovely-gleaming,
 Exulting ; and proudly he beareth his head, and his mane outstreaming
 Floateth his shoulders around, as in pride of his goodlihead 510
 By swift knees borne to the pastures and herds of the mares he hath sped ;
 So Paris the son of Priam adown from Pergamus' height,
 In his war-gear flashing like to the sun that walketh in light,
 Went laughing for glee, by his swift feet borne, till he came at the last
 Unto Hector his brother : a moment more, and the hero had passed 515

From the place where husband and wife their uttermost love-word spoke.

And the prince Alexander the godlike cried to the captain of folk :

“ Of a surety the feet of the laggard have hindered the haste of my lord,
And I came not in season due, according to that thy word.”

Made answer and spake to him Hector the hero of helm-crest bright : 520

“ Fair sir, there is no man on earth, the thoughts of whose heart be right,
Who would lightly esteem thy prowess in battle, for stalwart thou art :

Nay, thou art wilful-slack, and thou wilt not play thy part :

And stung is mine inmost soul with the words of reviling and scorn
Of the Trojans, of whom for thy sake such manifold toils be borne. 525

On then !—we will yet make atonement for all, if Zeus of his grace

Will grant that unto the Heaven-abiders, the deathless race,

In our halls we may raise up the cup of thanksgiving for freedom's day,

What time we have chased the Achaians from Troyland far away.”

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